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BIIDAABAN: THE MNJIKANING COMMUNITY HEALING MODEL

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BIIDAABAN: THE MNJIKANING COMMUNITY HEALING MODEL

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Under the sponsorship of Native Counselling Services of Alberta

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The involvement of a number of people allowed this research project to take shape and be successfully completed. We would like to extend our appreciation to some of those individuals and organizations.

This project grew from a conversation held at the 1998 gathering of Aboriginal community members who were brought together to explore issues of sex offender treatment in their communities. They knew that their healing approaches were making some fundamental changes in the life and well being of their communities and asked whether the Aboriginal Corrections Policy Unit, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada, would be interested in documenting those changes.

The Native Counselling Services of Alberta (NCSA), under the directorship of Allen Benson, agreed to undertake this participatory research project and contracted Dr. Joe Couture and Ruth Couture to undertake the research and writing of this report. We would like to thank the Native Counselling Services of Alberta for taking on this project; providing ongoing direction and support, through Ms Patti Laboucane-Benson; and setting the stage for the partnership that grew between the research team and Mnjikaning.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH PROTOCOL

Biidaaban / The Mnjikaning Community Healing Model,
Mnjikaning First Nation

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

While commonalties exist among many of the Aboriginal justice healing models and it is understood that Aboriginal cultures, value systems and processes differ significantly from the dominant society, dynamics of an acculturated, semi-urban community with an operationally successful casino presents a unique and complex backdrop against which Biidaaban operates. The purpose of this research, therefore, is to provide a holistic picture of *Biidaaban, the Mnjikaning Community Healing Strategy*, in Mnjikaning First Nation that includes a description of the community, its healing process and its value to the community.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives and goals of this research were manifold:

- To include the community of Mnjikaning in a participatory evaluation process (the core word of evaluation being "value") that is satisfactory to the Biidaaban staff, social services, community members and leaders;
- To design and implement a "holistic" research evaluation process that is relevant and meaningful to Biidaaban, the band Chief and Council and to the community;
- To present as much information as possible regarding the direct and collateral (value-added) benefits of the Biidaaban strategy from information obtained within the context of community perceptions and resulting benefits.

Partnered with representatives from the Mnjikaning First Nation Band, Biidaaban staff, the Healing Foundation and the Aboriginal Corrections Policy Unit Solicitor General's Department,

Native Counseling Services of Alberta (NCSA) was awarded the responsibility of conducting the research. The NCSA team who conducted the research has expertise and extensive experience in the community wellness process, the field of program design for Aboriginal communities, and qualitative research data collection and analysis.

METHODOLOGY

Research protocols are improved by incorporating the knowledge and expertise of diverse, yet related segments of the Mnjikaning population, Biidaaban and Gga Wiidookaadmin Social Services, community leaders/members, clients, casino employees and the researchers. All collaborated in the participatory research approach which was undertaken:

> Collaboration, mutual education and acting on results are the three key elements of participatory research. Such research stresses the mutually respectful partnerships between researchers, Biidaaban, Gga Wiidookaadmin staff, the Band, Biidaaban clients and the community. "When people form a group with a common purpose, investigate their situation and make decisions (they) are transformed - losing fear, gaining confidence, self-esteem and direction." [1]

Participatory research maximizes community and lay involvement. It negotiates a "balance" between developing valid generalizable knowledge and benefits the community that is being researched. The partnership is mutually respectful, based on shared responsibilities, costs and benefits leading to outcomes that are satisfactory to all partners.

Research protocols incorporated the knowledge and expertise of Biidaaban and Gga Wiidookaadmin workers, community members and researchers. "All collaborate in the research as equals. The collective wisdom of the community adds a perspective that broadens interpretations, increases the project's effectiveness and improves the credibility of oral and written results which save the community from potential stigmatization." [2]

RESEARCH DESIGN, TIMING

Initial meeting: protocol established

Bearing on entrance, permissions and relationships with the various Mnjikaning membership

groups, an initial meeting to discuss the purpose and scope of the research, protocol, roles and responsibilities was held March 31, 2000 among the Policy Analyst, Solicitor General - Aboriginal Corrections, Native Counseling Services of Alberta (NCSA) representatives and Biidaaban and Gga Wiidookaadmin staff.

FRAMEWORK FOR THE INFORMATION-GATHERING PROCESS: IMPLEMENTATION

- The Opening Circles, Sharing in the Decision-Making

To ensure that the research was conducted in participatory, protocol accepted ways, initial time was spent in free-flowing staff circles and discussions aimed at developing trust and understanding of staff needs, interests, sensitivities, cultural and community issues, as well as issues surrounding Biidaaban work. Understanding procedures that "worked" and "didn't work" in the community helped define the current research process, as did surfacing issues and planning or timing needs. Early circles, followed by one-on-one discussions, reinforced Biidaaban "ownership" of the research as well as the report, which was to follow.

- Planning Procedures, Purpose and Scope, Roles and Responsibilities

The reasons for the holistic evaluation, the research scope it entailed and its expected benefits were explained and discussed as were the roles and responsibilities of the Biidaaban staff working in partnership with the researchers. Interview protocol was established. It was determined that the best way to obtain interviews was on the basis of individual in-depth interviews to accommodate time constraints of the interviewees, most of whom were working men and women. Together with the Biidaaban coordinator and animator, preparation and pre-testing of a simple one page open-ended questionnaire was developed and an acceptable time frame, scheduling and conducting of interviews was established. Both women gave freely of their time answering questions, generating and scheduling an appropriate list of people to be interviewed.

- A Two-Pronged Effort: Quantitative (hard data - fact finding) and Qualitative (collateral or value-added benefits)

Quantitative information: A chart indicating *Criminal Code* federal and non-federal sentencing of the 44 persons who have abused going through Biidaaban to date, abuser offenses, length of incarceration (if going through the justice system) and actual length of time received through Biidaaban's alternative justice approach was developed (See Appendix A). As well, a chart indicating the number of abusers to date, and the six persons who had been abused and were taken through the Biidaaban process was provided. Additional quantitative information was obtained from quarterly Biidaaban reports for the past year inclusive of financial information (e.g. staff costs, operational costs, funding, etc.). A list of pertinent names and telephone numbers of judges, lawyers, probation officers etc. was also provided, along with Biidaaban coordinator and animator contact phone numbers.

Qualitative information centered on changes or shifts that have occurred since Biidaaban has been in process for the past five years. This was achieved through a ten point rating scale designed to obtain perceived "shifts" or "changes" in the state of community health and wellness over the past five years. Six supporting open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire to obtain the rationale behind these ratings and to specifically determine the value or benefits of Biidaaban as perceived by the community. The questionnaires were used as a response stimulus to generate freer, more open and spontaneous discussion and were part of the interviewing process. It was determined through past interviewing and research experience with First Nations, that questionnaires must be accompanied by a personal interview to ensure reliability and a clear understanding of the questions asked. This was particularly important in the Mnjikaning interviews because of the economic impact that the casino has had on the lives of people in the community and the need to clearly sort out benefits generated by the casino and by Biidaaban. The questionnaire may be found in Appendix B.

The interview model followed an evolutionary approach designed to "build" on the commentary initially generated to obtain a truer picture of the community in terms of health and wellness benefits. In a small community, commentary from a cross section of people becomes a clear indicator of the commonalties which exist (root values) as well as differences related to age, beliefs, interests, ways of thinking/feeling from emotional, mental, physical and spiritual perspectives.

Data collection: A total of 30 individual in-depth interviews, ranging from one-half to 2 hours each conducted among a cross-section of male/female abusers, those who have been abused, families of both as well as community opinion leaders, Crown attorneys, probation officers and

police. As part of the information-generating process, and in non-directive ways, information was also obtained through community activities: observations of an Elder's teachings to a second grade class, a community planning meeting, Youth Pow Wow, visit to the Rama casino, conversations with young people in the MASK fitness center, a community tour and a concluding pipe ceremony.

CHAPTER 2

QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION

THE ENVIRONMENT SURROUNDING BIIDAABAN

It is interesting to observe that both the casino and Biidaaban developed within a simultaneous time frame on parallel roads. Both faced initial obstacles specific to their development. Both officially came into being in 1996. It is, perhaps, the Creator's way of placing the necessary tools for balance in the Mnjikaning community in order to fully utilize their individual and collective gifts and move their People from colonial devastation into a newer, more encompassing global role, one that will propel them forward as an Aboriginal beacon of caring, sharing and hope. Mnjikaning has the potential to provide a meaningful model of Aboriginal leadership and cultural, spiritual and economic achievement in the fullest sense of the word, bringing a balanced, caring, sharing community into harmony and global focus. This vision, of course, is dependent upon the community's willingness to adhere to and work with those tools that will ensure and sustain the Creator's design for holistic balance - spiritual, physical, mental and emotional, thus reinforcing the rich meaning of their Medicine Wheel colors - red, black, white and yellow.

Prior to addressing the collateral or value-added benefits of Biidaaban, it is important to present a backdrop of the environment, the belief systems and an understanding of the people of Mnjikaning - the characteristics that have made this semi-urban community virtually self-sustaining in the past and economically sustainable in the present. Mnjikaning is in a position of transformation, and has an opportunity of bringing forth a new beginning of social integration; a new era of sharing their gifts of caring and kindness. This chapter will address the community and casino influences that impact against Biidaaban and will give some insight into the challenges Biidaaban faces in its growth and pursuit of community alternative justice healing.

THE MNJIKANING COMMUNITY

The population of Mnjikaning First Nation is approximately 650 on and 616 off reserve, and resides on a land base north of the narrows of Lake Simcoe and Lake Couchiching. It is on approximately 2,350 acres of land some 90 minutes north of Toronto and 12 kilometers from Orillia, the closest urban population of approximately 29,000 people.

The name Chippewas of Mnjikaning or "people of the fish fence" honours the community's commitment to care for the 4,500-year-old weir system which has recently been designated as a heritage site and which has made the community virtually self-sustaining in the past. Generations ago, Mnjikaning was a place of healing and renewal. Rama recently returned to its former name to honour the spirit of those who kept the place clean. There is no question that the community feels there is specialness to the land handed down by the grandfathers. A feeling of pride was manifested in different ways throughout the interviews.

> "People of Mnjikaning are extra special because we are people of the fish net. Native people are the original caretakers of this place. So for 10,000 years at least, my people have lived in this area and looked after Mother Earth, guarded the fish, held Council in the spring when the fish gather."

> "Mnjikaning Is known throughout the province as a place of healing and renewal, where you can see a medicine person, offer him tobacco and be given a straight answer. It was a place where groups were fighting, whether it was Iroquois or Chippewa. They laid down their weapons to be here. We have to remember our responsibility in the year 2000. My history isn't just my life, my mother's life or my grandmothers. It goes back to the beginning of time. It is a special place."

Kindness appears to be one of Mnjikaning's " primary gifts"...it is a unifier of Peoples.

Often in the interviews the phrase, "we do it with kindness" was expressed. An example of this gift of kindness is exemplified by one of its leaders, former Chief Lorraine, who was cited by a few community members as inspiring the traditional values of caring and sharing and "one who has both the leadership qualities of a tough negotiator" balanced by one who "works in kindness".

Storytellers say that Mnjikaning's location on Lake Couchiching was an inducement for northern reserves traveling through the river and lake systems to stop in the community where they were welcomed to rest, treated with kindness, shared stories and were restored prior to and after their journey to York (Toronto).

BRIDGERS OF TWO CULTURES

Mnjikaning people exemplify a resiliency. Some view themselves as "bridgers", moving back and forth between two cultures. Despite the devastating effects of colonialism, and those who were part of the residential school system that "literally beat the language and culture out of them", the people resisted by going underground in order to retain parts of their own culture and until it was "safe" to express themselves.

> "My grandmother was raised in the United Church and also raised traditional by her grandfather. She could not only make a black ash basket by hand and porcupine quill boxes and know how to color the porcupine quills, she could also speak Ojibway fluently. But she could also do many other things that belonged in the white world. She learned those things from different members of her family but kept all those cultural things a secret because it was not a good time to be Indian."

> "There were kids who went to the residential school system who hadn't seen their families in 10-12-15 years. No contact. All day long they would speak English, do reading, writing, arithmetic, but at night when they were in their beds they would speak Ojibway to each other to keep it alive."

> "A lot of things went underground. I'd say about 60% of the people were affected. And some are still very afraid, and afraid to admit it."

Acculturation has occurred through Native and non-Native inter-marriage, interaction with the dominant society in work-related, social and living situations, and through casino employment of over 3200 jobs[3] bringing into the area Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures from across Canada, the United States and Asia. Proximity to Toronto has also impacted the community's beliefs and value systems, as have strong church influences.

A community still harboring the effects of Colonialism

The effects of Colonialism still reverberate on many levels. The "cutting off" of the culture created deeply rooted pain, isolation, and dependencies resulting in family violence, alcohol and sexual abuse. Distrust of authority still surfaces and the "silence" is still felt.

> "It's continuing in a different way. The residential schools, the whole process of colonization, putting us on reserves, having an Indian agent, having to get a pass and leave. I see those same kinds of things happening in our staff at the casino right now.
>
> "Some things have become abundantly clear to me, in all the work I do and in all the organizations I belong to. What I see is that we as a People have lost our ability to make choices. It's monumental. Think about a parent when someone takes away your five year old. We don't know how to choose. Choices were made for us. It carries over - do I take this job or that job, should I yell at my supervisor or go outside and have a smoke. We have had to introduce the whole process of choice. We don't know how to take control of our lives."
>
> "People in the community got very antsy about circles when we first started them. They knew the power of the circle and knew that people would be saying too much that they didn't want to hear because we would be uncovering secrets. Circles are a common thing now, but it took ten years to resurrect them."
>
> "You could be arrested then. You went to jail for practicing the traditional ways. Kids who went to residential schools were beaten. They were not fed. It was 'bad'. Both boys and girls had their hair cut off and hair is a very important part of our culture. It's braided for ceremonies to remind us of the rights of sweet grass. Cutting that off is cutting us off from our past. If you want to change a people, you take them away from their families and then you can inject any kind of culture you want. You can teach them to be someone other than who they are if they're not surrounded by people who look and talk like them."
>
> "We could not have pow wows until 1960. It was against the law."

Reflections of colonial effects on present day events called to mind colonial assault still rooted within the justice system. The isolation of incarceration is reminiscent of the isolation of children, removal from families, community and cultural roots. The treatment of the incarcerated in punitive, non-traditional ways have psychological linkages to the past, and evidence of hardening, not healing outside of the community environment is still very prevalent.

> "Everyone is aware of the damages of the process of assimilation, particularly what residential schools have done, so it does not make sense that we put that much more time, effort and money into reintegration. We all know that Native people have to be healed in the environment in which they live. You can't take them out of it, incarcerate them and say, now that you're over here, you've got to heal. They won't. They will heal in the community they live in with family and friends that support them."

> "When we first work with them they want to tell us everything. When he (person who has harmed) comes to us after being in remand for six months there's a shell that's really hard to break down. It takes a lot of hard work."

ETHNOSTRESS

On still another level, the long-term effects of colonization have given way to, what is defined in semi-urban, acculturated Aboriginal communities as ethnostress – the stress of a whole life experience feeling "different" in the dominant culture. The sensitivity to or difference of one's ethnicity creates stress living in a society that has historically reinforced the "rightness" of their ways:

> "You're dealing with other people and have to connect with other people but you're different. There's something different about you and you know that there is. And everybody knows that there is. Our kids had to go through a lot when they went to school in Orillia because they were different."

> 'It's the pressure to conform, besides what your own culture tells you to do."

> "We're automatically under stress by being people of color, by being Native people. In many circles, in many areas, in many parts of our lives, we are not

treated as equal. Still to this day. I can tell you stories about doctors, dentists, pharmacists who did not treat me as good as everybody else once they found out I was an Indian."

"Most Native people are hurting. They're lost. They feel less than normal in society. When we go down the street we have two strikes against us; we're Native, we're Brown. We're looked at as useless, drunken, lazy people. If you don't believe that, open your eyes and listen to conversation in the non-Native world. When you're listening, they'll say the right things. You have to listen when they don't know you're listening, and you've got to watch the body language too."

"We're a product of colonization. Those who have imposed their way of life and rules on us have never left us the same. We have to fight for who we are, for an equal spot with everyone else. Because people will never believe we're as good as anyone else. So we feel the pressure to be better, cleaner, faster, and smarter to be considered half as good. That is still a left-over from our parents, from our older people, from the language that went underground."

The impact of prolonged stress creates identity problems. Being raised in non-Native families, or with extended families rather than one's own natural parents, working in one environment and living in another raises issues of "who I really am", and signals to the soul that "something is missing."

"There was a hole in my life, something missing all the time. I grew up in and around Native people all my life, but I never knew I was a Native person. I worked outside the community and my social structure was pretty well around non-Native people. All my relatives were Native, and I grew up around them. All the time that I lived away from the community, it felt like there was something missing. I'd say, 'who the blazes am I". Am I white or Native? I always had this warm feeling deep down inside that kept telling me I need to go home. For years when I was devastated by alcohol this emptiness was compounded."

"Somehow I always knew I was of Aboriginal heritage. I grew up in a non-Native Canadian mainstream household, yet I always felt there was something missing.

> There was something that just didn't feel right. But once I followed the red path, it was amazing to me to find out how many things I had done in my first 30 years that had basis in Aboriginal culture without realizing it."

One woman vividly recalls here experience as a seven year old in the Orillia school system. Native children were "beaten up", "made fun of because of their clothing", and "had their lunches stolen". In another event the children were separated from their non-Native 1st grade peers, placed into another room and given an I.Q. test. Her I.Q. test results were the highest between both Native and non-Native children students. She recalls school authorities saying:

> "You had the highest mark on the test. We've gone through your file at school and we've looked to see how you've been as a student, and we see you've been a very good student. But there is nothing here that talks about your being adopted. So we need to know where you came from and how did these people raise you. I said, 'I'm not adopted. I belong to my mom and dad.' They kept prodding me and said, 'you can trust us. Who do you really belong to.' I said, 'my mom and dad.'"

Thirty-five years later, though the circumstances differed, this same person's ability as an Aboriginal is still being questioned. This same young woman became a Native Justice of the Peace, and is now Director of Corporate Affairs at the casino. At a justice conference, a male attendee persisted in trying to determine how she got 'such a good job' was it because she was Native; was it because she was a woman? She finally retorted:

> "I think I got this job, not because I'm a woman, not because I'm Native, but because I went for an interview in a wheelchair." He looked at me, picked up his tray, left and never spoke to me again. I wanted to throw him through the wall. We're not a bunch of back-woods people. We're well educated and politically astute people."

To sharpen the point, the community is keenly aware that "all eyes are on them" to see whether or not the casino will succeed through Mnjikaning's efforts in producing Canada's largest First Nations casino.[4]

A casino employment manager observes the manifestation of low self-esteem through the deep levels of fear or shyness exhibited in some employees not wanting to change their jobs or in "moving up". Lower skill level jobs are retained despite an employee's acknowledged capabilities. Low self-esteem precludes learning new skills or changing jobs because one feels less secure, less "safe" making the change.

> "We see the effects of residential schools and the 'obeying'. In the casino some of our employees don't want to move upward. They've been devastated for so long that they are still afraid to want to change their career, to learn more, to move up in their jobs."

IMPORTERS OF CULTURE AND TRADITION

Because of the devastation, the uprooting of traditional values, the persistent feeling that "something is missing ", and a deep need to re-discover 'who they are', Mnjikaning imported culture and tradition. One person placed the 60's and 70's as a time of rebirthing in the country and the time to speak out against past devastation and government illegalities. It was said that Mnjikaning became known in the southern province as a place where the community imported culture in order to return to the teachings that were lost. One person notes:

> "We would bring Elders from their reserves to teach us from as far as Sault Ste. Marie, North Bay and as far as out West. We made no apology for it. What would have happened to us if we didn't? We'd look like a bunch of people who looked like Indians, but we were not because we didn't understand tradition. So we imported those teachers. A few of our young people went to other places in Canada and the United States to live on other reserves, to marry. They spent time with Native people, learned their songs and ceremonies, and now these people are in their 40's. They're back teaching the rest of us. These are the people keeping the pow wow alive here, who are helping our kids do their regalia."

The pattern of importing culture is still evident today. Elders are invited into the community to counsel individuals, do men's circles, and provide traditional teachings to young children and community members.

Others seek their own teachers or marry other First Nations or non-Aboriginal people, who, in turn bring forward their own culture. The increasing cultural diversity in Mnjikaning is changing the social and cultural fabric of the community. One woman aptly illustrates this diversity:

> "It is just recently that I started picking up on traditional ways. Most of my teachers are three-fires Medeowin society. I'm from the Mi'gmaw Nation but live here in the Ojibway culture. I'm married to a Potawatami, but I have teachers who are Mohawk."

The increasing population in Mnjikaning brings a melting pot of cultures to bear on the community, now referred to as a "global community". It accentuates the need to strengthen the community's gifts of caring, sharing and kindness as well as to provide necessary "choices" to address individual needs. Considering the impact of acculturation of a diverse population, and to ensure Mnjikaning's health and wellness, it is critical that the community's core remain holistically balanced and grounded in tradition.

The time is right - a return to the teachings

> "Old people, the keepers of the stories, tell us that the beginning of the turning point is when young people would pick up their medicine and remember who they are as Native people."

There is evidence to suggest that this is beginning to happen. At the onset of the interviews, a few 30 and 40 year olds proudly and voluntarily recited their Spirit name as a way of "grounding" themselves and "bringing the 'who I am' into balance." This behavior makes a statement and is of particular importance because of increasing cultural diversity and the stress of acculturation. These men and women viewed themselves as role models for the younger generation in guiding their return to traditional teachings and cultural recovery.

> "I am part of the 40 year old group that was foretold that a number of generations after the first white man arrived, we would see how things had gone downhill and how we needed to re-group. To be able to look in the mirror and say, 'I am Anishnabe and that's a good thing to be.' I should answer questions,

> and its okay to wear a braid, and its okay to wear my moccasins when I'm at a meeting. It's okay to kindly insist that we open public meetings with a prayer because that's who we are and who we've been for a long time. It takes courage to do that, and you can't do it day after day alone. But you can do it."

The way one returns to his/her traditional roots and the time it takes is a highly personal journey. Both the community and Biidaaban are making efforts to increase Elder involvement in traditional ceremonies. A healing Lodge is under consideration, as is a cultural center, the latter of which is largely to address tourist interest in the peoples of Mnjikaning, but also as an external first step that will emphasize, "who we are" and "what we're all about."

To some, being Aboriginal in a neo-traditional climate resonates deeply in one's spirit or "in the heart". Described as a 'blend' of tradition resulting from the cultural diversity of the people who live in the area, it may manifest as one person describes:

> "They follow their own spiritual path drawing from the Native culture as much or as little as they choose. Because of the diversity of the culture and the Native people who come here from other bands throughout the country, or return from the United States to learn, grow and to return or to settle down in Mnjikaning, it becomes a blend of all cultures. So if they don't want to attend a circle, they attend group therapy."

The result of cultural and spiritual diversity necessitates the need for considerable flexibility in healing approaches used. In developing a treatment plan with clients, for example, Biidaaban takes into careful consideration the specific needs of individual clients in order to determine the best ways to begin the process of healing. Treatment plans are highly individualized and choices are given to maximize the opportunity for the client to heal his/her own spirit in his/her own way. Biidaaban finds that this approach strengthens the client's desire to heal and reinforces that Biidaaban is working "with" that person to achieve this goal.

Perhaps the ways in which tradition returns will require a new sensitivity to the teachings, time to learn, time to heal the deep wounds of the past, and perhaps, time for the emergence of a new traditional and cultural identity that is rooted in the old ways:

"We cannot say that just because someone doesn't go to sweats or wear their hair longer or dance the pow wow that they're not Native, that those resonances are not happening deep in their spirit, in their soul. It's inside of you. It's who you are. If you see someone living in Toronto whose visual effects are no different from anyone else's you cannot say that they do not feel their spirit. It is a very personal thing, and Native people just need to be allowed to be; just to be. There's been so much devastation; they need to return to practice their tradition as they choose. Residential schools have tampered with our lifeblood for so long, it will take time to sort things out. We've been told we were wrong and we'd be punished. It will take longer for some, or it may come in different ways, with a new sense of identity."

Intercultural interaction between the diverse cultures in Mnjikaning is beginning to produce new and blended spiritual and cultural patterns.

LEADERSHIP, MARKETING STRATEGISTS, PLANNERS, VISIONARIES

A number of men and women believe that Mnjikaning has been gifted with leadership abilities rooted long before contact. For the past five years the Chief and Council have "worked hard to integrate the community holistically, not only in economic development, but also in health and wellness, education and housing."

As a result of Bill C-31, casino employment, plans for the building of a new hotel and entertainment center and a more holistically integrated community, more people are migrating to Mnjikaning. Even with a small landmass, in-migration trends for the past five years have reflected substantial increase in housing – from 150 homes ten years ago to 230 today including starter condominiums to accommodate the flux of people moving into the area. At a recent community planning session, land divisions for 100 more new homes are on the planning board. The community also exhibits genuine interest in caring for their senior or Elder population with the completion of sixteen senior apartments designed to address the growing needs of the elderly.

The organizational structure of Mnjikaning is community-based – i.e. interdependent relationships that protect its members and gives strength to its decision-making processes. In

all but very controversial issues, which abide by majority rule, community consensus generally flourishes.

A community vision put into place in 1984 addresses the community's long-term goals. Changes are made periodically to accommodate changing community needs, issues or new desires. The vision encompasses seven distinct categories determined by community consensus and planned for development: community (structure and land), economic, recreation, education, cultural, health and social services and political. Within each of these seven categories there are from seven to fourteen different projects to be addressed. The weight or importance of a specific project planned for community action is charted within small or large boxes (indicative of the number of community members supporting a particular action or project – the larger the box, the more people support the action; the smaller the box the fewer the people who support the action).

A community needs assessment is conducted approximately every four years. Community goals are further refined, discussed and prioritized to be put into action. Projects to be addressed are determined by community consensus and committees are then put into place to research these issues, prepare proposals and address budgetary/capital requirements. Community meetings are regularly held and are well attended (with, on-average, 75 participants). Community-based decision-making is held in high regard. Those interviewed consider the community to be strongly focused, balanced in their approach, with the health and well being of the community in mind. Descriptors consistently used to address the people of Mnjikaning in this community-based process were: "action-oriented"; "pro-active", "visionary". The process appears to be working well, enjoys a proven track record and the support of its chief, council and community.

> "They uphold the good of the community. That's first and foremost with them."

> "We put a lot of stock in what the community has to say. 1984 was our first big community 10 year strategy. We went to the community and said, what do you want to see in this community. It's really amazing because the community has always managed to come up with really important things, and they haven't gone crazy. They haven't gone overboard. They've always come back to what's in the community's best interest and that is always amazing to me. Our council has always managed to have faith in that. It's always been impressive to me. The

focus is on the community and what is best for the community and the community isn't afraid to speak up."

"We really are visionaries. We're always thinking ahead. That is Mnjikaning. It has always been pro-active, rather than reactive."

Community meetings are open. There appears to be the freedom to speak one's mind. An example given was that of a 12-year-old boy who had the courage to speak at the meeting on behalf of fellow skate boarders who wanted a skate boarding area. The request is being honored.

At the present time the main focus in the community centers on increasing physical capacity (expand the infrastructure) to accommodate the influx of peoples coming into the area. Other plans include: provision for expansion of recreational facilities for community youth and adults, address the need for the convenience of food shopping in the area (e.g. grocery store/supermarket), expanding work areas, providing a healing (healing lodge) and cultural foundation, and expansion of a daycare/child center into one building to accommodate the burgeoning need for increased space due to the growing number of working mothers. The seven categories to be addressed for 2002 are prioritized and aimed at "self-sufficiency and self-determination" and are defined to be put into action in order of community importance.

The following community assessment needs represent the top 12 out of 44 priorities in seven categories defined by the community:

MNJIKANING COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Top 12 out of 44 community priorities

2001-2002

Category	**Traditional Meaning**	**Priority Placed by Community**
INFRASTRUCTURE	*Good planning generates less problems in the future*	(1) Housing/Subdivision
RECREATION	*To promote a Health & Wellness Lifestyle*	(2) Outdoor/Multipurpose Sport Facility/ Skate park

Category	Traditional Meaning	Priority Placed by Community
EDUCATION	*To make every member of the band a global citizen*	(7) More structured activities for all age groups other than seniors (3) New Child Care Building (9) Develop Ojibwe Language Resources & Cultural Awareness
ECONOMIC SELF SUFFICIENCY	*To adequately provide for our physical needs*	(4) Convenient Grocery Store (5) Training & Assistance in Business Planning
POLITICAL	*To have self-determination, freedom, pride and a wellness lifestyle*	(6) Financial & Administrative Accountability
CULTURE	*To understand who we are. To promote joy, happiness, & pride*	(8) Cultural: Center and/or Museum
HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES	*We need to care for and be kind to our family our relatives, our neighbors in order*	(8) Privacy for Residents (8) Open Extended Care (9) Multi-purpose Health & Social Services Bldg.

- Double or triple numbers represents a tie/same number of people cited priority

A mall is in its conceptual stages at the present time. Considerable discussion is ensuing relative to development and placement of a Healing Lodge, and a Cultural Centre/Museum. A

hotel and entertainment complex in association with the casino is about to begin its building stages.

A Mnjikaning radio station has just been granted license to operate. This will expand Biidaaban's opportunity to strengthen awareness of its work and will offer another media vehicle by which to communicate their messages to the community. It also provides another career opportunity for students.

About two miles north of the village, a significant block of property became available and is currently in negotiation to acquire as part of the massive land and land use plan currently going through the community process.

Putting the vision of the community's hopes, wishes and dreams into practice is a complex process regarding mutual adaptation between the initial vision, the programs, resources, organization skills and community support.

SOME SIGNIFICANT COMMUNITY MILESTONES:

The community-based decision-making process places premium value on education and training of the people as stepping-stones towards self-government and self-sustainability. The care and well being of children, seniors and the community at large are at the root of community efforts. Some of the milestones that redefine Mnjikaning's values of the past aimed at forming a vibrant and healthy future include:

Monies earned from the land leased by the casino have gone into a trust fund for Mnjikaning children, called "Looking Far Ahead", until the community decides the time is "right" to distribute those monies.

> "About 150 years ago we surrendered blocks and blocks of land and it was to have gone into a trust fund which we were supposed to live off for the rest of our lives. Somehow the money never got into our trust account. Indian Affairs was managing it. This time, we're managing it. And it's going to be there for us. It's required. When that day comes, the community will decide how to handle it. It's a security blanket for our children we never had."

Completion of the M.A.S.K. (Mnjikaning Arena Sports Ki) containing a state of the art hockey/skating rink and exercise facilities, gymnasium and equipment was important for the community. Currently it also houses Biidaaban and Social Services. The Youth pow wow was held in the M.A.S.K. this spring with 469 or 37% of the total Mnjikaning population under 25 (and 42 % under 25 on-reserve) in attendance. The community is proactive in addressing the recreational needs of youth and dealing with potential youth related issues, and recognize that the years under 20 characteristically express youth's rebellion. Correctional Services of Canada's population statistics (2000) forecasts the possibility of a dramatic increase of young offenders in the next decade resulting from the thin edge of an Aboriginal baby boom now reaching maturity. To date, there are no gangs in Mnjikaning, nor any anticipated.

The first Aboriginal school, Kendaaswin, has been operative for 3 years and has increased from K to Grade 8, with plans to continue growth expansion up to grade 12. Originally designed for 100-student capacity, enrollment has reached 120 and is increasing. Expansion becomes necessary because Kendaaswin is now "bursting at its seams." Parents have the option of sending their children to school in Orillia, but more and more prefer to send their children to a local school that offers traditional teachings. Daycare building expansion into one large building, rather than the current three, is already being planned.

Focused decision-making: Selection of the casino architect was based on the ability of the architect to "listen" to community needs and desires in order to arrive at a community-accepted design. Three international architects, one of who was a reputed Aboriginal architect, presented to 75 community members sitting at round tables of 8-10 people. After all presentations, and unbeknown to other tables, a unanimous community decision was reached. The Japanese architect was selected because he "listened " to their needs and fulfilled design criteria.

Formal initiation of Biidaaban as a community-based alternative justice model was meant to holistically heal or balance and reintegrate into the community those persons who have harmed. Also, housing Social Services and Biidaaban in the same building creates the opportunity for stronger holistic unity or team effort, closer interaction and fuller utilization of resources (e.g. various counseling disciplines: Gambling Addictions, NNADAP, Child & Family Welfare, Rainbow, etc).

In terms of casino development, the community has put safeguards into place to protect the community in anticipation of problems commonly associated with gaming. Police staffing, for example, was increased from 4 to 14; a gambling addictions counselor was put into place in tandem with the casino; both police and the casino statistically track casino crime. Police interviews indicate that Mnjikaning is a very "safe" community. Its crime rate has been "stable and relatively minor for the past two years". In fact, the community is considered "safer than many others".

Career counseling/placement has become a priority.

Summer casino-related job programs and opportunities for high school students have been increased with "real" jobs that provide early training and experience in various areas, enabling students to define their own interests through various job opportunities.

Many in leadership positions within the community and in the casino (economic development, casino management, etc.) are non-Aboriginal. This is not surprising since community goals and visions center on achieving long term goals and casino related skills and talents are currently in short supply. The community places emphasis on and seeks out the "best" skills, abilities, education and talents. It places a high premium on education and on the hiring and retaining people of high caliber (e.g. various casino-management related positions, financial skills, engineering, etc.) emphasis is on skills and talent, rather than on ethnicity. The underlying wisdom behind this planning strategy is the community's long-term vision of enabling their own people to move into these positions "as they are ready" (trained and educated to assume these responsibilities). Focus is on Mnjikaning's vision to be completely self-sufficient and to fully manage and operate the casino, hotel, entertainment complex, etc. within a time span of 12 years. The vision held by community members is to eventually be completely self-reliant in virtually every aspect of their lives and to redefine Mnjikaning's goals to form a vibrant and healthy future.

> "The strategy is to use top level people with all the skills and abilities to learn from them and to gradually build capacity to become totally self sufficient. Mnjikaning is strategizing. There are good management skills generating."
> "We want kids who can dream, who can become the engineers, because we need engineers, we want kids to become management. We'll have the places for them to work. Even when our people take charge, they hire a non-Aboriginal

that has credentials. They go out of their way to get them. They've recruited top-notch people because we don't have those skills in our community. It's a stated objective in our community, upward mobility, to move our people up into significant places. And it will come."

"I can safely say, the community is taking charge of themselves and is putting behind them colonial devastation."

Mnjikaning views itself as being a leader in First Nations movement toward self-government.

"I think Mnjikaning is miles ahead of a lot of other reserves in the area in terms of self-government. We're already doing it, even though we're not theoretically self-governing, we are."

"The movement toward self-government started long ago, more than five years, but it has been a concentrated effort in the last five years. That has helped Biidaaban too because there is more willingness for us to open up and be independent and responsible in our lives."

The values and principles at the heart and soul of the community's needs help to ground projects. These values and principles call upon Biidaaban to strengthen Mnjikaning's traditional core by achieving the necessary holistic balance it requires.

CASINO RAMA

Rupert Ross, Assistant Crown Attorney in northwestern Canada since 1985[5], describes the studies in which many in the field of criminal justice are familiar. He describes what occurs in a community when the one source of income in one-industry towns close.

"When jobs suddenly vanish, the unemployed are robbed of one source of self-esteem: the ability to provide adequately for their families. Alcohol and drug use increases measurably, along with the rate of family violence. If the loss of that one source of self-esteem can have such a significant effect, what must have been the effect on all of Canada's Aboriginal people as our institutions attacked every aspect of their lives."

We see the resultant poverty, high welfare, alcoholism, drugs and family violence. We see the struggles to heal people in some bush reserves where everything is done to help people heal, to provide some measure of self-esteem, to prevent suicides, but without sustaining economic benefits, the struggles continue to persist and even fail.

In Mnjikaning the reverse is true. Through long, persistent community efforts and even grave initial community concern regarding the possibility of opening a casino in Mnjikaning several years ago, the economic benefits to the community have, in just four short years, brought overwhelming pride and self-esteem quickly to its community members. The ability to provide well for one's family overrides any possible negatives that may come forward. Over and over again, the feeling of "equality", a sense of "freedom", of "accomplishment, "of worth"-- are the major motivating factors that contribute to the development of "staying power", responsibility and stability of casino employees who now not only retain their jobs, but also excel at them.

> "You're allowed 16 days. Once you go beyond those 16 days, you're out. That's it. You can be re-hired later on, but once the money starts coming in consistently and you know that paycheck will be there for you, it changes things. We have one person who maxed out twice and this month she is "employee of the month".

Five years ago,

> "A lot of people didn't even have a bank account, let alone a credit card. You have to prove you're credit worthy."

> "People were collecting welfare. Jobs do make a big difference. People are putting food on the table, they're buying houses and they're driving cars. All of the things they didn't do five years ago. Economics really enhances self-esteem. You can see it happening."

> "There wasn't 95% employment, as there is now. It's a radical change from the past. Both men and women are working and this is changing the social structure of the community. Women aren't as dependent on men now. It's making a big difference."

"Some noticeable signs are people driving better cars, wearing better clothes and having nicer homes. Instead of spending money on drugs and alcohol, they are spending it on themselves and their families. This tells me they believe they deserve these things and have more self esteem."

"When you go from 80% unemployment to 95% employment and there are only 12 or 15 people on the welfare list out of 1,200, and there were hundreds before that, that's a radical shift."

If Maslow's hierarchal needs (fulfillment of primary needs, prior to fulfillment of one's secondary needs) are acknowledged then it would follow that first, Mnjikaning's primary needs for food, shelter and living are becoming quickly satisfied by the economic benefits brought about by the casino. Hypothetically, the readiness to address one's inner and spiritual needs would then follow. There are signs to indicate that this is happening; that Biidaaban's role in helping to strengthen and support the traditional core of the community - helping the community to achieve its balance - is beginning to take shape. This will be addressed in more detail in the next chapter.

One of the issues, among others, that the casino's economic benefits bring to the community is the responsible use of money. The power structure in the home over money has changed, since women now have the opportunity to work and incomes are more equalized. As two counselors noted,

"Our people for far too long had to do with very little. We didn't even have enough money to live in a healthy way. Now, we need to teach our people that when we do have money, to use it responsibly. Immediate gratification is the result of not having much for such a long time. So it becomes very clear that now promises of money, issues with money will influence the people. There is a balance that is needed here, and issues of money are being brought to the forefront for us to balance and for our community to learn."

"When I look back just a few years in this community, having a job is a big bonus. But there are problems that come with that as well. Consider 3 generations in a family that never worked. What happens when overnight they both end up working? There's a shift in power. The balance has shifted in terms

of who gets to make the decisions. Now that the woman is working she's making as much money as the man. Is that allowed? Is the man still the head of the household? I see some problems when that begins to happen."

These are becoming new issues to address, but they do not cloud the multiple benefits that have been brought to the community by Casino Rama.

THE BENEFITS[6]

- Provision of over 3,200 casino and casino-related jobs in 3 shifts, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There is no reason for anyone in the area to be unemployed;
- Largest single site Aboriginal employer in Canada, with 620 jobs; 70 diverse First Nation communities from B.C to Newfoundland;
- Significant labor force is required (recruited from nearby reserves) for new hotel construction taking place. Aim is for 50% Aboriginal employment for a two year period;
- The casino views itself as a "good neighbor and community citizen" not just to Mnjikaning, but also throughout Simcoe County. Over $3M is allocated for small community projects throughout the county; some provide money for women's shelters; the Native Women's Wellness Conference which addresses residential school issues and supports the Community Foundation of Orillia, a self-sustaining permanent subsidy fund to enable the people in the community to apply for aid for small projects;
- Financial assistance was provided to employ the gambling addictions counselor in Mnjikaning and the first Biidaaban coordinator. Contribution was also given for an Employee Assistance Program, handled by NNADAP to ensure that alcohol consumption does not interfere with job responsibilities, their life, their health;
- Profits from the casino are divided among Carnival, the Ontario government under OLGC (Ontario Lottery Gaming Corporation) and 134 First Nations represented by Mnjikaning. The $400M proceeds in 2000 will enable some of the northern Aboriginal communities to have "running water for the first time" or will be used as individual communities see fit to expand in whatever need exists: education, ground development, sanitation, etc.;

- Employees are provided with excellent medical and health benefits as well as payment for such therapies as massage therapy to sustain the health and well being of the employee;
- Casino job training programs exist for C.R.E.W. (Casino Rama Employee Workforce). Promotion is from within and an innovative 4-step job training approach for C.R.E.W development of activities and skills are available to enhance an employee's growth from within the organization;
- Through a Community Wellness program, Rama draws on the medicine wheel approach to balance mental, physical, spiritual and emotional wellness in communities and individuals by supporting community-based initiatives, services and events;
- Casino Rama is a major sponsor of the 1st Annual Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards;
- Awards for Excellence for Aboriginal Student for post secondary students - 8 awards of $5,000 each, honor the student's personal involvement in both academic and community settings;
- Casino Rama has assisted more than 150 community groups in wellness initiatives;
- People who have been previously incarcerated may still obtain jobs at the casino. Prison records are not held against them. The only criteria is to have the skills required for a job and to "tell the truth"; and
- The on-the-job-training at the casino has provided regular full time jobs in the security line of work (guards/police) both in Orillia and in other provinces.

Safeguards have been put into place to alleviate some of the fears or concerns that may be present among community members: e.g. fear of extensive drug trafficking, traffic accidents as a result of the 13,000 vehicles on the roads daily and expectations of crimes such as prostitution and pick pocketing.

Casino crime statistics are regularly tracked with the police. Casino and police statistics reveal that only two crimes have escalated since the casino has come into being in 1996; traffic accidents as a result of the 13,000 vehicles on the roads daily and trespassing.

NNADAP files report a decrease in alcohol consumption, but an increase, almost in epidemic proportion recently, to cocaine usage among 25-45 year olds. They report that cocaine is a

new experience and a new high that has serious consequences. Usage seems to be an extension of alcohol consumption which, when one is inebriated, opens the door to trying a new experience.

Drug trafficking security is tight. Plains-clothes officers work the casino regularly on each shift. Prosecution is immediate. While some traffickers have been apprehended, no one from the Mnjikaning community appears to be involved. There is community concern for prostitution once the hotel and entertainment centers are built. Fraudulent use of credit cards and money laundering is surfacing, but it has not involved the people of Mnjikaning. Police and the courts relate to these problems as "common in the gaming industry". Based on initial controls put into effect by the community at the onset of the casino's opening, it would seem that anticipated issues and problems are or will continue to be addressed by Chief and Council.

CHAPTER 3

QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION
VALUE-ADDED BENEFITS IN A COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT
OF RAPID AND DRAMATIC CHANGE

THE VALUES OF BIIDAABAN AND ITS IMPORTANCE TO COMMUNITY WELLNESS

Unlike other Aboriginal communities on their journey into health and wellness, Biidaaban operates in a far different environmental climate. The dynamics of a semi-urban community with a successful casino bringing instantaneous economic benefits that provide 95% of its people with work, self-esteem and material rewards together with the swell of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures coming into the area has brought dramatic and rapid change to Mnjikaning. These factors add to the new challenges Biidaaban will face as it moves out of its infancy stages into maturity.

Biidaaban's value to the community amidst dramatic change lies, in part, with its being rooted in tradition, its well planned design, the training and self-healing of staff and volunteers, a high level of core staff commitment, support from its Chief during its developmental stages and a unified team focus. Four World's Centre for Development Learning[7] captured some of Biidaaban's strength in its review:

> "Biidaaban thinking and competence in this area (facilitating the healing process of individuals and families in the community related to sexual abuse and other issues requiring a healing process) is well advanced, at least partially due to a fairly thorough basic training process that occurred as the program was being developed. In our view it (Biidaaban) is a very good investment, in terms of developing capacity of many Aboriginal communities to address healing and justice issues related to sexual abuse: the program is rooted in more than ten years grassroots efforts to deal with abuse and other wellness related issues; considerable good work has been done in designing the program and on training Biidaaban staff and volunteers; there is considerable political will in the

community to address the issue; the Biidaaban circle has an abundance of good people with high levels of commitment and capacity."

Biidaaban recognizes that its traditional core, the root of its strength, must not be compromised particularly in light of the dramatic changes occurring in the community.

THE BIRTHING OF BIIDAABAN

In 1992, women from the community did three retreats with several teen-agers in healing groups. While it was felt that some girls wanted to share some sensitive issues, nothing was disclosed at the time. However, the Human Services Committee knew that sexual abuse was a hidden issue and this was discussed at many meetings. In 1993, two women who had been sexually abused as teenagers disclosed their abuse to two Social Workers from the community. As court procedures ensued, counselors realized that the courts did not address the young women's needs and the experience became one of painful re-victimization.

"We did not feel that the harms done to them were fully understood and there was no apology for the wrongs that were done. It became clear that the court system is adversarial, encourages people not to take responsibility for the wrongs they had done and to deny and fight it in more cases. These people go to jail claiming innocence and we get re-victimized because the family, who want to believe that their family member has done no harm, sees us as victimizers. So they reinforce denial and victimize us because they tell us we are the ones who have harmed the family member. It creates on-going conflict in the community, because families split up and take sides and the issue then is never addressed in such a way to re-establish the relationship."

Those who supported the women knew a process had to be put into place that would give the victim consideration, as well as the abuser. Two female counselors who had been working with and supporting the women, awakened the community to the prevailing sexual abuse:

"For the women who first brought those disclosures to court, it was a shaking kind of experience. The first time people had actually brought it out in the open. It cracked everything open."

> "Their (the girls who were harmed) willingness to be open to trust, their recognition that when the sharing took place within a circle of those with whom they felt safe, they began to heal themselves and the growing sense of how widespread sexual abuse had been was buried so deeply in our community, that this led to the creation of Biidaaban."

Despite community shock, disbelief and personal confrontations made against them, the women persisted in their actions. A group of social workers, Gga Wiidookaadmin (*"Let's all help each other"*), the Council's Human Services committee mobilized the community to deal with its buried history and moved to initiate the project. In 1994 the Mnjikaning First Nation began development of the process, with initial funding contributed by The Ontario Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy for a coordinator's salary. The committee began discussions, generated statistics from treatment centers, applied for some funding to obtain child sexual abuse information and consulted with Dr. Ed Connors[8] who pioneered and helped birth the concept, developed, trained and nurtured Biidaaban. Through Dr. Connor's guidance, the committee of 16 looked at and analyzed models developed by other reserves in terms of holistic community healing/alternative justice and decided that the Hollow Water[9] process best fit their needs. With adaptations, they devised the Biidaaban healing model.[10] In 1996 the Chief and Council implemented a protocol (a BCR - Band Council Resolution) giving Biidaaban its formal stature. The healing model is shown as Appendix C.

Life Skills Coaches training had been in the Biidaaban process since 1995. Traditional training was begun to introduce, teach and help the staff and volunteers recognize traditional teachings and how they fit in, to guide and become the core of the evolving healing process. Smudging and the use of sweetgrass were used in the circles. The group also worked on their own personal healing and growth to address the abuse and dysfunction from their own backgrounds (e.g. heal the healer approach). Overall, it took two years to develop the model. An eagerness and commitment to learn was apparent among all workers and continues to this day. Attending culturally-related workshops, bringing Elders in for circles, traditional teachings and healing work is on-going as are opportunities to obtain training certificates in wellness related areas that fuse traditional with non-traditional training, (an example of this might be to bring in a therapist to work with the children and the staff in cooperative therapy approaches where staff are learning as they are supporting). The staff earns certificates through training and workshops. New participants receive hands-on training for given periods of time.

In 1998, Biidaaban received funding from Aboriginal Corrections Policy, Solicitor General of Canada, for implementation of a three-year pilot project to address Biidaaban's expansion needs. These needs centered on: an increase of salaried staff to four (a coordinator, animator, and two wellness counselors); bringing in specialized expertise from qualified clinicians, expansion of learning opportunities to increase Biidaaban's capacity in promoting community wellness and educating band members regarding the issue of sexual abuse and other services which Biidaaban offers (e.g. emotional support, one-on-one counseling, referrals to Traditional healers, etc. (See Appendix D: Biidaaban Information For Community Members)

FROM PROVING TO PRAISE: FROM MISDEMEANORS TO SERIOUS CASES

Biidaaban has worked hard "to prove" themselves to the court system. They regularly spend time initiating discussions and training with the police, probation, parole, the Crown and Judges. Because of their passion for the work and their desire for a true partnership with the criminal justice system, Biidaaban and justice have worked together in harmony and have come to share a mutually respectful relationship.

At first, because of their newness, the courts were only willing to refer misdemeanors, such as property offenses, break and enter's, minor theft, etc. The courts wouldn't deal with sexual offenses nor with serious assault and, at first, Biidaaban wanted to move slowly in an effort to be well grounded:

> "We spent a lot of time with the courts trying to convince them to stop putting our people in jail and to give them to us to try to help them. That was a fight in itself. The legal system believes they were doing the right thing by giving us small cases to begin with: B & E's, theft, misdemeanors, family violence in the home, someone got slapped or hit."
>
> "They started with less serious cases like B & E's and common assault, but have gradually been assuming more and more serious cases."
>
> "I was describing what our goals and visions were, but he didn't want to hear it. But in five years he (Crown Attorney) now recommends people to us, even if we're not in court. If an Aboriginal person comes in front of him, he'll contact one

of us to come back in with this client to make sure he has every opportunity at the resources that we provide. That's how much he supports us now."

TO STRONGLY RECOMMENDING

Because of their integrity and growing credibility, Biidaaban has earned the right to obtain more serious cases. Today, "half the clients are sexual abuse cases". The courts have come to rely more and more on Biidaaban and strongly recommend them at every opportunity. Biidaaban is not currently taking "outside" (of the community) cases although many of these cases have been brought to their attention.

"Over the past five years we have developed a good name in provincial courts. Half of our clients are sexual abuse cases."

"Now we've moved to the point where the courts are referring sexual offenses. The courts have already made a shift and are turning over sexual abusers and other more serious stages."

"Crown attorneys and court judges are strongly recommending Biidaaban now. Things are finally beginning to move for us in the courts. We have to be very accountable first and foremost to our community and to the outside legal system. We do not want to work separately from them. We want to work with them. We need their support. They need to have the faith that we're going to be responsible for the clients we take on. If they have to be breached for not following the treatment plan as it was laid out, we have to be forefront in breaching. It's a legal document. It's entered into the courts and the client must follow the treatment plan. We can't compromise this. We, by no shape or form ever want to be seen as giving a 'get out of jail free card'. Our program is not free. It's tough. It's easier to go to jail than it is to have a look at yourself and be in front of your peers and be accountable for the wrongs you've done to whoever it is and how that has affected the community."

They have to plead guilty and take responsibility for their actions, number one. They need to say they're sorry and they need to right the wrongs. Restitution. To ensure the community that it will never happen again."

As a result of their efforts, Biidaaban has received over 50 calls over the past three years from communities interested in learning about their work. Biidaaban conducts two-day education workshops two to three times a year to disseminate information to the community, outside the community, among Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), Chief and Council and with whomever has a desire to learn more about the process. As a rule, approximately 25 people attend these workshops. The workshops become one way to explain the program, strengthen community trust and to dispel any "myths" that may tend to circulate regarding the process.

The steady progress that Biidaaban has made have some members of the police force feeling "it's simply a matter of time before those charged are not sentenced for six months (remand) before Biidaaban gets them. They'll go straight to Biidaaban."

> "It's a process I've seen developing over two years. There's no need to hurry. You don't want to slow it down. You don't want to hurry it up. Let it evolve at it's own pace. Biidaaban isn't yet in full force. Some of the sexual offenses still aren't on line, but they will be and it'll be a natural transition - Biidaaban is still quite new. Their credibility and trust is growing more and more and it's just a matter of working with the crown and judges"

BIIDAABAN'S VALUE TO THE COURTS AND TO THE COMMUNITY

THE JUSTICE SYSTEM SPEAKS

Biidaaban has earned the court's respect, not only for themselves, but also for the people of Mnjikaning. They operate in true partnership with the judicial system. Dave Russell, Assistant Crown Attorney working with Biidaaban at the time this report was written, sees the team as committed, conscientious and thorough. Their dedicated efforts to the wellness of the community reduces the risk of further client transgressions and allows probationary periods to be tempered:

> "The Biidaaban team I deal with are committed, conscientious and thorough. On occasion because of their efforts, I can divert an accused person from the criminal system. Based on their efforts I can stay a prosecution because I know they will supervise and assist that person over the coming years. On occasion, based on their efforts while I still prosecute, I can temper my position on

sentence because I know they (Biidaaban) will properly supervise the offender during a probationary period whether it follows a sentence or not.
The bottom line is that I feel confident that when a member of that community has sought out assistance of the Biidaaban team, the team will do all they possibly can to assist that person re-assimilate into the community and reduce the risk of further transgressions. What that means is that (Biidaaban's) dedication to their community as a whole and the confidence that an accused under their supervision and participation in the program has an excellent chance of becoming a contributing member of their community thereby reducing the likelihood of further criminal activity. I support their work wholeheartedly."

Another Crown Attorney who has worked with Biidaaban in the past reinforces its value to the court and to the community. Through her point of view, Biidaaban is a bridger and teacher of Aboriginal values and an emerging leader in alternative justice.

"The thing that always impressed me is the high degree of credibility that they (Biidaaban) maintain for their program. They are very careful about whom they recommend and also by being open-minded about how to work with the criminal justice system, rather than to take the approach, as some communities do, to try to impose something on the criminal justice system. I had a lot of faith in their ability to work with people and the degree of integrity they have. It never once occurred to me that they would fail to honestly report to me or to the court, someone's lack of commitment to the program in order to keep them out of jail. Very often we would be able to keep people out of jail because we knew we could rely on the Biidaaban program to actually effect social change between the time they came to the court and the time that the court actually had to deal with them. It was really wonderful. Very often I'd file an interim treatment plan with the court as part of the material I was relying on in support of taking the position that there would be a lengthy adjournment before sentencing. That plan would get filed with the court, and when the person would come back to court to be sentenced, there'd be a progress report done by Biidaaban which would be filed for comparison purposes. This enables Biidaaban to work much more meaningfully with their people because they have actual, not guesswork, appreciation of what could happen in court. It was very satisfying to feel that they were just as eager to understand the system as I presented it to them, and

to work with it, as it was for me to understand the real alternatives that they were presenting to me as a Crown. There was mutual learning and respect, which I miss deeply. There is a mutual respect between Biidaaban and the justice system - very, very much so. They're clearly ahead of other Aboriginal communities in terms of their responsibilities to alternative justice, their actions and their integrity. They have grown amazingly." [11]

AN INSPIRATION AND TEACHING RESOURCE

According to Rupert Ross[12], "the impact of Biidaaban's efforts extends beyond the families in Rama. They're becoming an inspiration to other communities and a teaching resource. Biidaaban willingly participates in many justice-related activities bridging the gap of understanding and teaching restorative justice from a First Nations perspective." Ross continues:

"The Crown Attorneys Association did a sentencing course. This year we had a couple of women from Biidaaban come, plus one of the Attorneys. They spoke in front of 40 Crown Attorneys. They gave a slide presentation that really prompted a lot of thinking. We also had a think tank that my Ministry held in Orillia about 18 months ago, "Future Directions for Criminal Law". One of the things on the agenda was Restorative Justice. Not many people have a sense of what it is except that it's weak on criminals. Three of the ladies from Biidaaban came and they blew everyone away just talking honestly as human beings about how they understood the problems and how to deal with them. It was powerful! They were asked all kinds of questions about victim protection and they were able to answer every one of them with a degree of what we would call sophistication in our system. These women blew everyone away.

In fact, three Biidaaban women came to an OPP Restorative Justice Workshop. They spent several afternoons detailing how they came about and at coffee afterwards, I said to them, 'do you realize what happened here today? You're not here asking for permission from non-Aboriginals to do what's appropriate for you. You are teaching them what they might be contemplating doing for themselves.' This is a little bit of a reversal. You guys don't see it yet, but that's

what's taking place. We are learning from First Nations perspectives to the degree that the country does not, as yet, perceive. But it's happening!!"

AGENCIES SPEAK

The work of Biidaaban extends outward. As suggested above, Biidaaban is educating and assisting Aboriginal people beyond community boundaries. The Barrie & District Rape Crises line, as one example (as well as other agencies), has been very responsive to Biidaaban's teaching and assistance:

> "It has been quite a relief for us to have a place to refer Aboriginal people to when they have been abused. The awareness that your public education programs have created has been tremendous. It is extremely important for our Aboriginal community to have Biidaaban holistic healing model to draw upon for support, which encompasses healing for the abused, the abuser, the family members and the community. We have found it very important for the community to receive training and public awareness from native people. Our volunteers and staff have been consistently impressed with our openness and willingness to teach our members. Everyone here has appreciated your assistance."

THE COMMUNITY SPEAKS

On the local level, the Mnjikaning Police Services have established a protocol stipulating that all fourteen of its current and new members participate in the on-going Biidaaban two-day information workshops as a way of understanding and learning more about the process. It appears to be a participatory learning experience for both.

> "We're just putting our protocol together and everyone will take Biidaaban training prior to 2001 and we'll train in groups to make sure we all have the opportunity of taking it. The entire Biidaaban staff does the training. We're teaching them and they're teaching us and that takes place on a regular basis. They understand more of what we do and we have an understanding of what they do. The Crown is involved as well. They have regular meetings with the Crown to discuss cases and that's how they learn about different cases."

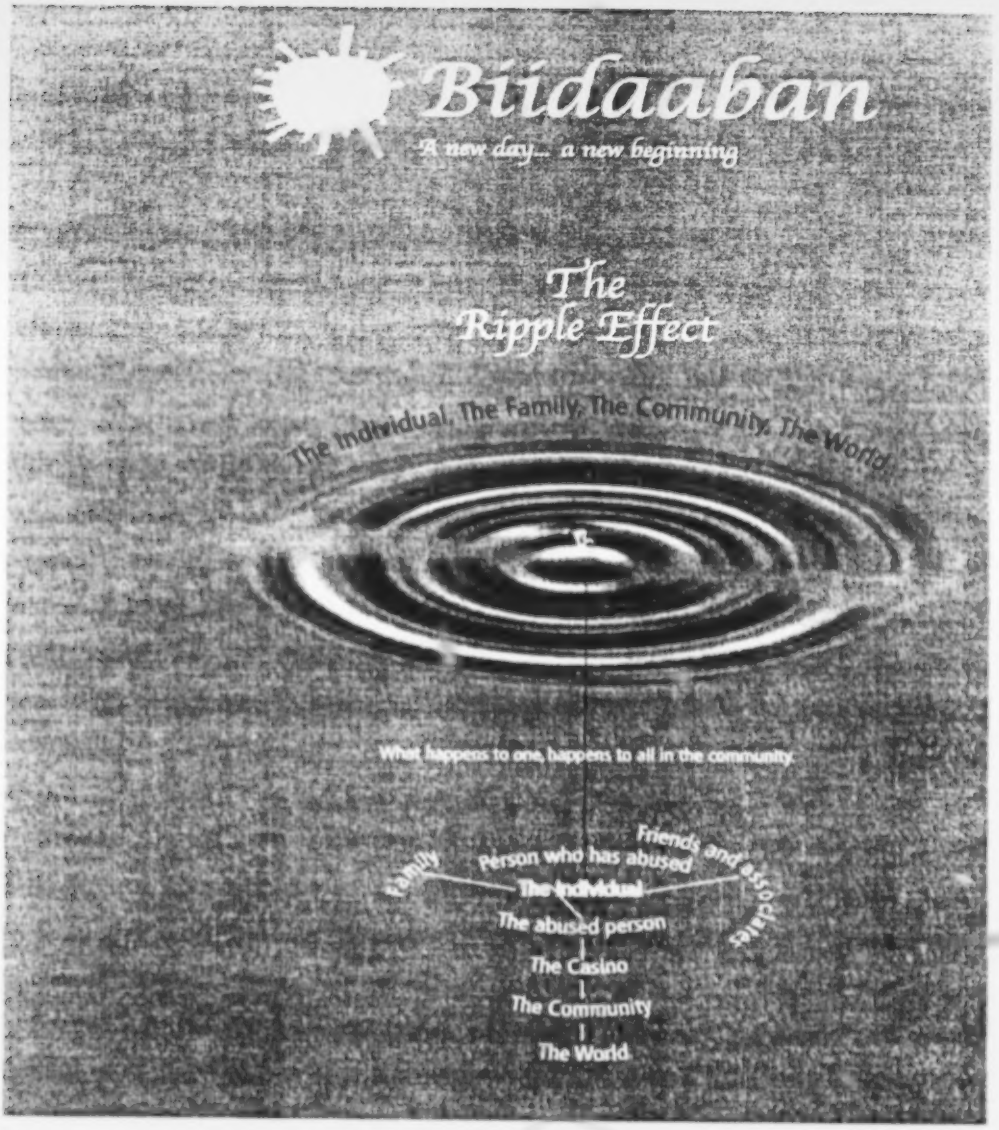
THE POWER OF THE CIRCLE; THE COMMUNITY GATHERING

Not only has the justice system found value in Biidaaban's work, those who have attended Community Gatherings have been powerfully affected by the healing power of the Circle. From family members of the person who has harmed, the one who has been harmed, to friends, relatives, community members, casino employees, police, probation officers, the Crown, lawyers - the list goes on. To each, something positive has occurred. Hearts have been opened. Behaviors changed. Something personal happens, in some way, to each person who participates. In little or big ways a change occurs. The "ripples" of connectedness are holistically experienced - mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually. Just one person, who has begun his or her healing, also begins healing the community.

> "Everyone is so dependent on one another. If one person abuses and his healing does not occur, those ill effects are felt by everyone in the community".

> "If you're out of sorts in one area, that area will affect the other parts as well. If a person in a family is not right, it will begin to affect everyone else. If the family is not right, it doesn't just affect the clan, it affects the whole community. So we seek balance everyday. *And Biidaaban works to put people back into balance.* Not just the person who had done wrong to them, but their partners, their children, their grandchildren, their chief and council, the neighbors, others who belong to the clan, even the outside world. We're all connected."

As more and more heal, the community becomes more balanced. The healing ripples extend outward in larger and larger ever expanding circles. In the circular motion of the medicine wheel, the ripples continue to enlarge as they move outward. Pain is released, the ripples soften, the circles blend, healing occurs, the outer rim comes to rest with the water...the water calms; the community heals.



Like ripples in a pond, the more people are involved, the better it is, the more perspectives we have, the more balanced we become.

> "It's a rippling effect and it affects the community. As the ripples go out, at some point they're going to hit the shore and come back. So if you don't handle that first ripple right away, there are clashes, and when they come back, they make waves."

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Rupert Ross[13] describes the ripple effect in another way:

> "One of the things that isn't widely known yet is that every time people in dysfunctional relationships are put through processes where they learn how to make things work and Biidaaban has done exactly that, it means the next problem that arises, they now have a much greater skill set to handle these problems on their own, instead of being further disabled in their skill sets by being taken over by professionals in an adversarial process where their animosities and distrust are greater. They now have skill sets they didn't have before, as well as a desire and the belief that they can do it. Biidaaban is creating skill sets their clients need to live in their own context to better handle the inevitable changes. That's where it grows and that's where the ripple effect really shows itself."

Those who have gone through the Biidaaban circles strongly support the process. Directly or indirectly, each of those involved with the person who has done harm (the person who was harmed, both their families) is prepared for the Gathering. In working with the families, Biidaaban must first determine each person's readiness to sit in the circle for the Gathering. For example: can the person forgive, what emotional reactions/blockages exist, how does one deal with these emotions; how "ready" is one for the Gathering and how will the person interface with the person who has harmed, etc.? They continue to work with the persons until "they are ready". The person who has harmed must be approached in the "right way", in a way of honesty, in a way of kindness. Much has to be worked out before honest and open communication can occur. Much has to be mended.

The result of Biidaaban's work is deep impact, community healing and some remarkable stories to share:

> "The Biidaaban circle was unlike anything else I experienced; when at our last pow wow a member of the community was asked to give the opening prayer. This is a man who seven years ago, the psychiatrists in jail said he was beyond help. I would really like to see the story they wrote about him. I'm sure they said there's probably nothing more we can do for him. Try drugs. Lock him up for good. He's bound to re-offend. This man now is not drinking, not beating up women, not lying to everybody and not taking advantage of anybody. He is

paying a mortgage, he has a job, he's keeping the Fire and he's giving the opening address. That's a miracle! You can't put a price on a miracle."

"There's a young boy I worked with when I was a guidance counselor at the school. He became involved with Biidaaban. He really didn't want to but his choice was to go to jail or admit he did something wrong. We told him we'd help him and the young girl that he got involved with. He said, 'okay, I can do that.' So he started going for counseling. One of the things that they found out was that he had been sexually abused as a young child. He never told anybody that. He was a young man in his 20's. What a horrible crushing secret he carried for 20 years and that's why he got into trouble with this girl. Think of all the demons he was battling—drinking, drugs, disappearing for days, not working, not being able to keep a job, treating women poorly. All of that said he was out of balance. His parents were alcoholics, he was poor, he was sexually abused and his first girlfriend dumped him. He went through the Biidaaban process and now he is working full time, he is not drinking and the girl he got in trouble with, when they pass each other on the street, they'll say hello to each other. She wanted to have him locked up and throw away the key. He has made those amends. He has ended up working part-time with some of the young people here. When people found out he was in trouble, their first reaction was to get him away from the kids because they feared he'd do the same thing over again. With support, he is able to work with those children again. He's a dried out, respectable young man with a good future."

The power of the circle ripples out to others in many different ways: Aboriginal casino management meetings now discuss issues in a circle; mothers share the tradition of the circle and explain to their children how it was conducted (e.g. stone is passed around for the person to speak, silence and respect is given the person who is speaking). The circle process transfers to teachings in the home; young children become aware of their own feelings and openly express them in teaching ways to their parents. A probation officer, moved by the power, trust and safety of the circle reveals her own abuse in public for the first time and most of all, the person who has abused learns that people in the community have seen the "good" in him/her and have understood the reasons behind the harm. The person experiences not only the community plan, but also the caring of the community. The totality of this experience awakens his/her responsiveness for healing to take place.

These comments are only droplets blending into the community waters:

> "A police officer sat in on one of our recent Community Gatherings. We came to the point in the history of the case where the one who had caused harm sexually assaulted a young girl. He had now heard from community members and families about how it had affected them and the harm that had been felt from it. He spoke and apologized for what he had done to the individual but he realized all of a sudden all the harm he had caused and what happened between the two families and the hurt they were feeling. He also recalled all the good things that they had in the past and how that had suddenly been broken. So he was seeing the larger impact and was apologizing to all those people to whom he had caused harm. When it came around to the time that the people spoke about what he had to do to correct the wrongs he had done, the police officer was in tears as she described how his statement had affected her. She had worked in our community from the far North for a number of years and she had been raised in one of our communities in the North and she was actually disclosing publicly for the first time, how she had been abused and was saying how overwhelming it was to her being moved into tears. She couldn't believe what she was hearing because she never before heard an offender take responsibility for the wrongs that he had done and apologize for it. Up until this time she had not believed this was possible. That it could happen in such a public forum within the community".

Words similar to "it was inconceivable", "amazing", "I couldn't believe it" were heard in the interviews in response to the happenings in the circle:

> "I've been a Crown for ten years and I was sitting there (at the Gathering) thinking about all the family and sexual violence I've dealt with over the years. I thought how inconceivable it was for me that every case I've dealt with hadn't had the benefit of Biidaaban in which such a personal level of resolution is achieved. Not only for the victim, but also the accused. I came away with the sense that, "yes, he really did get it". He knew what he did was wrong and he's not going to make that mistake again. He has a deeper appreciation. It's no mystery why we in the justice system use words like 'I am imposing sentence on you sir'. This was much more an acceptance of responsibility than anything I had ever seen anyplace else. It was very heart-warming and eye opening

because there's some amazingly powerful work that those people (Biidaaban) were able to achieve in the time that they had with those two."

"I sat in a circle for someone who had broken the law and they did a diversion from the court system. It was a breach or embezzlement over $5,000. I noticed the fear that the young woman had just walking into the building before we started. I worked with her, I knew her, and we all felt there was a reason behind what she did. She was a great worker with lots of potential to move ahead. It was amazing. We all said the good things we felt about her and how much we cared for her. She knew what she did was wrong, and while we wanted restitution for $2,500, she said the only disagreement was she wanted to pay everything back, the entire $5000. For those who have gotten so far away from their path that they've broken the law, to bring them back into their own community when they are so vulnerable and fragile, how wonderful to show them that they're allowed to be okay. That all the things you did to bring you to this point are really okay and you can learn to live with them and to be in balance with them, well, Biidaaban is the key to that. It's reaching to people that slip out everywhere else and grabbing them and bringing them back."

"I didn't know people cared about me or that they saw the good things in me too. I thought they'd all be against me. It stopped the gossip. Now they knew the truth and I can live with that. I have bonded with Dawn. She has been a great help to me and I know I can go to her whenever I need to and she's there for me. I know I'll never do anything like that again."

"I wish you could see the faces on the people after the Gathering. The relief. They feel good about themselves and they don't have to hide the stuff anymore. No more hiding and lying. All the weight comes off their shoulders. You can see their eyes smiling. It's hard work. It's gut-wrenching work. Sometimes we have horrible circles to get through and we'll start at 9:00 in the morning and go until after 11:00 at night but it's worth every second. To set people free is a wonderful thing and it takes a whole team of people to do that. All of us are usually there to support the process. It's the process of getting in touch with your feelings. The government doesn't understand that. They don't understand feelings."

"You have to be committed to the process. You just can't just show up at a sentencing circle, say your piece and leave. It affects you in a way that nothing else in your whole life will. Even if you weren't an abuser, or a victim, even if you just went, or your sister or your mother went. They will come back, like I did, transformed. They will say, 'I went to the circle and it was amazing. I wish you could have gone too."

The power of the Biidaaban circle process is experienced so deeply that those who have participated volunteered there was "no way a price could be placed on Biidaaban's value", "on self esteem". In the many ways expressed, the value of "just one person" reintegrated into his/her community "is worth far more than any dollar or cents figure."

"There is no way you can't put a price on what Biidaaban has done."

"What really matters is that the person going through the process is healed."

"You can't put a price on the fact that someone in the community doesn't beat up on women anymore, or how long the person has stopped drinking. So the price that the government puts on what it costs to feed, house and clothe a person in prison for that period of time really is arbitrary and it really doesn't matter. What really matters is what happens to that person at the end of it. That's the measure of success of that program."

"They (Justice) aren't able to tell us what it costs to that person's life and their psyche and their mental, physical and spiritual life. They just can't add that up in dollars and cents."

Biidaaban recognizes that healing is a life-long journey and it is the person him/herself who does the work with their assistance. In consideration of this and from the comments of circle participants, in the short two-year period that Biidaaban works with each client, their accomplishments have been "miraculous".

IMPRESSIVE BENEFITS FOR A BRIEF HISTORY

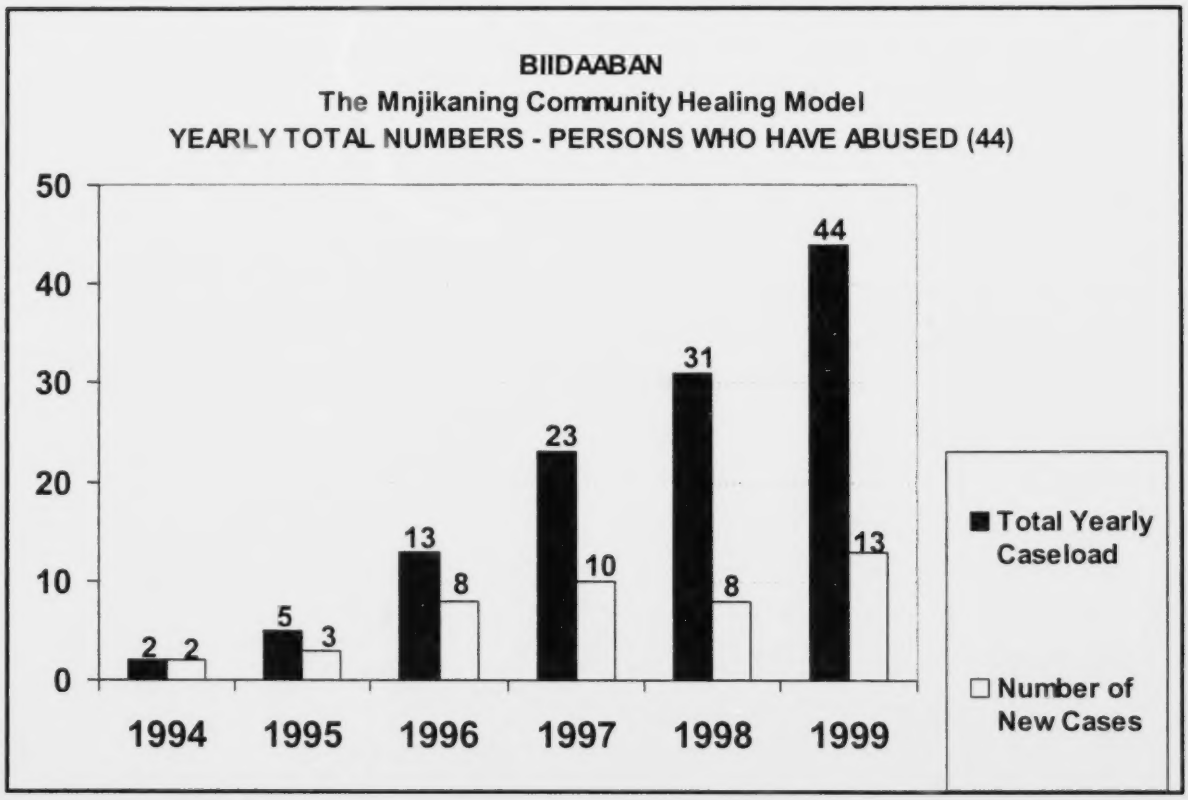
Several important values or benefits may be attributed to Biidaaban even within its short four to five year history and its move from infancy into emerging maturity. Factually impressive figures are only some of the indicators of value, integrity and accountability that have been achieved by Biidaaban in their efforts to bring forward community wellness. Results may best be highlighted by these achievements:

- Of the 44 clients (those who have harmed), who have gone through the Biidaaban process since 1995, none have recidivated;
- Biidaaban has achieved lessened or tempered sentences[14] for its clients (see Appendix A);
- The rate of disclosures has tripled – and a trend toward increases continues;
- Biidaaban's demanding workload is exemplified by its growth in activities and statistical change over a two year period:
  - Biidaaban statistics indicate substantial growth comparisons between the years 1997-1998, and 1999-2000[15] (See Appendix E). The number of circles conducted has dramatically increased to 1,099; with 66 circles alone being conducted the first quarter of 2000 (Jan-March); fourteen activities not available in 1997-1998 were added to the following year's activities. (e.g. working with children, Kendaaswin school, traditional healers, treatment centers, meetings with judges, police, etc.). Other activities were substantially increased, such as use of psychologists, team meetings, etc.
  - Appendix E exhibits a time/value analysis of Biidaaban's work with one average Typical Abuser. In an average case, close to 400 hours over a two-year period is typically spent in the process of reintegrating one person back into the community.

The pattern of Biidaaban's growth over a six-year period, from 1994-1999 is charted below and indicates the number of persons who have abused over the course of that time. Six persons who have been harmed have also been taken through the Biidaaban process increasing the total number of community members who are moving into health and wellness through Biidaaban to 50.

It takes two years to process one person. While Biidaaban agrees that the healing journey takes one's entire lifetime, Biidaaban's achievements in just two years with a typical offender is nothing short of a miracle. The person who has harmed, who has been harmed and their families have new skill sets in place to help them work out their own problems more effectively. As these skill sets become more widely used the community gets healthier.

...Disclosures encourage responsibility and are indicators of trust and safety



It is important to note that the tripling disclosure rate and its increasing trend becomes a growth indicator of trust and safety, which community members have for Biidaaban. Disclosures tend to increase when those who harm[16], and those who have been harmed can feel "safe", especially those disclosures dealing with relational dysfunctions where there may be guilt, the fear of disclosing to someone else, or a person doesn't want to be adversarial. In an alternative process, as community members become more and more secure and continue to trust, disclosures will continue to increase because it is the "safe" thing to do.

Rupert Ross acknowledges that Biidaaban's process encourages responsibility taking:

> "The degree to which disclosure in the process is aimed at healing prompts acceptance of responsibility as opposed to guilty pleas and trials. So the degree to which it avoids trials and putting victims through the double victimization of cross-examination and court processes is huge. With a standard of proof that is so high beyond reasonable doubt that if people really want to fight the truth in things in criminal courts, they can because most of these events take place without other witnesses. So it becomes a one on one story and judges have a high standard, so they acquit. You get nowhere. The cost of a punishment-based system in terms of arriving at truth and responsibility taking is horrendous. We never acknowledge that *processes like Biidaaban's which encourage responsibility taking because the punishment issue is subsided do phenomenally greater things actually dealing with community problems."*

As stated earlier, Biidaaban shares the point of view of other communities (who are working to heal their members), that healing does not occur in one, two or three years, but rather, is a life-long journey. The intent, therefore, is to ensure that the person is on his/her path and has the skills to effectively continue the healing. Community members find Biidaaban's work extraordinary in its accomplishments, despite the fact that many have come from six months of remand. Biidaaban has seen that a shell develops in the individual during his/her stay in remand, which hinders the healing process and therefore necessitates Biidaaban staff to "work harder to crack the shell" before the healing process begins.

Through its stages of early development and continuing growth and in an attempt to be pro-active, Biidaaban has moved from crises intervention to prevention and to a global focus on community wellness.

The next chapter continues with shifts or changes in the health and wellness of the community and the challenges Biidaaban faces.

CHAPTER 4

THE SHIFTS OR CHANGES IN MNJIKANING'S STATE OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: CHALLENGES BIIDAABAN FACES

The questionnaire in Appendix B was designed to obtain the shifts or changes in Mnjikaning's state of health and wellness over the past five years as perceived by its community members, social services and opinion leaders.

It was interesting to observe that no one ranked the state of Mnjikaning's health and wellness five years ago at the low (0-2) end of the wellness scale. This is an indication that considerable work and effort had already taken place in the community to achieve this status. Community attention for the past five years has been more strongly focused on issues surrounding the casino, building the community's infrastructure and on migration back into the community. Five years ago the community did not experience either the bleakness or the despair that other communities have faced in the beginning stages of their healing journey. Rather, in Mnjikaning, a feeling of "hope" prevailed.

The substantial shift in the community's perception of its state of health and wellness from five years ago centered on two primary factors:

- The overwhelming economic benefits brought about by Casino Rama and its "overnight" provision of self-esteem, pride, community (capacity) building, monetary rewards, and
- "Excellent" programs which have been/and are being put into place by the community, social services and Biidaaban together with high caliber, professionally qualified men and women who have assumed responsibilities in their particular fields of specialization. It has been, and is, action by the people, for the people in the community.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS- DRAMATIC CHANGES

Not surprisingly, perceptions of a healthier community within the past five years were strongly equated with monetary rewards - working regularly, owning and maintaining a home, a new car, caring for one's family, wearing designer clothing, being credit worthy and having a bank account and a credit card.

Looking back just seven years ago, many band members easily recalled that the only building in Mnjikaning was Medical Services. Now:

> "There is a mall with offices, band offices, a Shell gasoline station, Second Cup, the Mnjikaning Arena & Sports Ki (M.A.S.K)., a seniors housing complex and, of course, the casino."

> "A fire department, new police department, significantly more police, public works, a library, an infrastructure, many more than the 25 band employees that we had 10 years ago. We were very fortunate to have very good planners for the past 10-15 years."

> "We have running water in our homes."

The physical changes which have taken place are metaphorical parts of a puzzle which have begun to form a picture to which the people can now relate, take pride in, see the benefits and realize that the picture is nearing completion.

> "The pieces are fitting together now. It's exciting. You can see it happening now."

Because responses were so heavily weighted by comments about monetary rewards, and the dramatic changes it has brought about in the lives of families, the tendency of informants was to first play back these benefits. Seemingly, the values and visions of Biidaaban tended to recede into the background. However, as the interviews were further analyzed, it became patently clear that Biidaaban's role to date is not only seen as important, it is deemed vital to the development and sustenance of health and wellness in the community.

> "Biidaaban is the rod that goes through the community - the balancer that keeps things leveled, holding the values first and foremost."

The economic benefits derived from the casino serve as a powerful catalyst that awakens the need for self-awareness and self-development, behavioral and attitudinal changes. People want to get healthier and want to retain what they are now able to enjoy monetarily. Motivated by the realization "that good things are happening" and that the need to retain one's job is critical, employment-related and other counseling is sought out and harm-reduction techniques are put into practice:

> "When you know the money is the pay check that is there regularly for you, you don't want to give that up. You'll do anything to keep it coming in. You just don't drink during the week; you do your drinking when you're not working. People want to keep their money and independence."

> "People are now recognizing that consumption of alcohol/drugs is detrimental to their health and well-being. They recognize that other people have made the step and they are more willing now to make that step to get counseling. We now have an Employee Assistance Program, which we didn't have before. A lot of people are accessing the service now because they have to keep their jobs; they have to keep their family. It has never been so much in the forefront as it is now."

> "There's definitely been a change in health and wellness. The community sees themselves as healthier. Economic development has brought self-esteem."

Even if community members approach counseling, "just to save their jobs", social services recognizes that learning/skills development is taking place that will benefit the individual. The shift or changes in attitudes and behaviors over the past five years are typified by these comments:

PAST FIVE YEARS	TODAY
Drinking was allowed at the ball field and park. There was no real safety to protect our children.	Men are pushing baby carriages and thinking nothing of it.
Five or six years ago I saw drunken people walking down the road. I always lived in Rama. I don't see that anymore. Before people just sat around, we now have things to do. Kids have someplace to play now, they don't have to stay home and get into trouble.	People are taking more pride in themselves.
Not very good five years ago. Back then there were a lot of secrets kept, families and the whole community, from the abuse that went on a long time ago and recently. 75% were unemployed and that does something to the people. People were very angry.	There's more open discussion around abuse and awareness that children must be kept safe. There is raised awareness of alternative forms of justice.
Not as many counselors as there are now. It was a community who had forgotten where they came from as Native people and was too afraid to do anything about it.	Much better employment. People are seeking out health and information and services now, and recognizing the need for education.
A lot more turnkey kids, little self-esteem. Very few people on the reserve were employed. There was a loss of pride.	Young mothers receive pre-natal care. There are healthier babies, more open discussions of alcohol abuse and physical abuse.
People were not as involved in the community. We didn't have community meetings until the casino was coming. They (people) were separated. Out for themselves.	Acknowledgement that there are problems that needs to be addressed. Sexual abuse is still whispered about, but this is starting to change.
	More people are healing in our community now than are in jail.
	There are more circles taking place.
	The overall health of the community is improving. There are more programs to help those who need it, more career and recreational opportunities, choices to where you can turn for help, more options to make your own decisions.

Five years ago we didn't have our social services unit. We had individual programs so the workers were really isolated from each other. There was no communication, really. So that's one BIG difference in terms of the working environment. No teams to bring in so much richness. People also didn't have a lot of trust for each other because they had to protect their piece of the pie. You got funding from the government in little pockets, in one-person programs, so that didn't make for trust.	People just don't go to a party and keep it going on and on. That's what was destructive. There's been an overall reduction of alcohol use. There's so much going on now in the school, the health center and in social services. This wasn't there before. The political climate changed. What we've been able to accomplish is the result of the political climate in the past five years. Our Chief (Lorraine) is known to be a very progressive and excellent public speaker, fluent in the language, knowledgeable of traditions and songs. She has not been afraid to say those things and bring things up in public. She'll say yes, we're building a school but let's make sure there's a teacher there who can help them make jingles for the jingle dress. Nobody would have said something that radical before.

It is noteworthy that the number and quality of positive responses far outweighed remembrances of the past. It is another indicator of community healing taking place. Like the name Biidaaban which contains three separate tenses, Bii (future), daa (present) and ban (past), Mnjikaning continues to work in the present, moving into the future, aided by the balancing arm and preventative support of Biidaaban. And like its name, Biidaaban, the dawn of each new day presents to the people the sacredness of a new start, a fresh new beginning and a new day to heal.

THE PROGRAMS

While surface commentary strongly addresses the economic benefits now enjoyed by Mnjikaning, it is important to recognize that this commentary is based on enthusiastic responses of now "having something", when before, there was colonial devastation, hardship and poverty. It is little wonder that enthusiasm exists. However, comments clearly reflect that without Biidaaban the community would be "out of balance", and the internalization of Aboriginal values and traditions would be severely weakened.

Considerable commentary regarding the many "excellent" programs that have been put into place in the community, particularly for children, was volunteered. It is generally accepted that breaking the cycle of violence begins with the very young, during the pre-school years. While adults are repositories of the past, children represent the future - the promise of the seven generations and a better life for Aboriginal people.

> "Anybody interested in education has got to be interested in getting there early. The first five years of life are the foundation years for the child, states Edward F. Zigler, Child Psychologist at Yale University and founder of the American Head Start program. Dr. T. Barry Brazelton of Harvard University states, "scientific research now proves that early childhood development programs that help kids in so many other ways are our most powerful weapons in the fight against violence"[17]

The Perry Preschool Longitudinal Study in the United States links good day care to crime prevention and goes on to state, "kids are less likely to commit crimes later in life. They found that youths who spent their early years in quality day care were half as likely to be arrested later." In terms of children:

1. The community is expanding its Day Care center into one larger building to meet the demands of working mothers. Currently there is a Younger Day Care of 3 1/2 to 4 year olds with a maximum of 30 children; a 4 year and up (in the Kendaaswin elementary school) and an after school program for children whose working parents pick them up after working hours. All the head teachers must have their ECE (Early Childhood Education diploma). Other staff members are encouraged to work towards their 2-year college diploma in early education. The ratio of children to teachers is two teachers for every 15 children. Assistants are not required to have an ECE diploma.

2. Pre-natal care and life skills programs exist for young mothers in the community.
3. Aboriginal Head Start on the reserve regularly extends community invitations to parents, grandparents and extended families for educational and informative meetings with topics such as "Children are Our Future". Baby sitting services are provided to encourage young families to attend.
4. Kendaaswin Elementary School, Mnjikaning's school that incorporates traditional knowledge into its operations, has been in existence for only three years and is already bursting at its seams. It has expanded beyond its 95-100-student projection with an enrollment of 120 students. Interest in, and an effort to bring traditional teachings to the children continues to grow. Elder Roger Jones teaches the traditional ways to children monthly through stories, songs and question and answer interactions.

The following, highlights only a few of the many programs or activities that have been developed for children:

- Biidaaban presents a course on Personal Safety ("Good Touch, Bad Touch") at graduated levels to accommodate all grades. Their efforts have resulted in disclosures and an openness in communication among the mothers who now ask questions and discuss sexually-directed issues that their children may be facing;
- Theraplay - a newly interactive (parent participation) program is given by a certified therapist, trainer and supervisor in play therapy. Three Biidaaban staff are taking the program and will become certified Theraplay therapists;
- "Bears and Otter Tales", is a program offered by Elders Stephanie and Ernie Sandy which is based on the Ojibway Seven Sacred Teachings;
- Rainbows is a one hour per week program that deals with children's' feelings of grief or loss through death or divorce and is directed to young children through to adolescence;
- Virtues is a 52 virtues or values-based program that includes - courage, honor, justice, kindness and all innate virtues. It re-directs children into positive values, sharing and knowing there are different ways of doing things without hurting each other. The results are making children strong enough to talk, giving them more decision-making power, helping them to internalize these values and, in a sense, become teachers to their parents by sharing these values at home;

- Meal programs are in place for breakfast, snack time and lunch;
- A local artist works with grades 5 and 6 students and shares his talents with the children;
- Individual and small group programming in the areas of speech and language have been established with plans to hire a Communications Disorder Assistant to deliver these programs; and
- Project Dare, a peer pressure leadership skills program, is being taught in the 5th grade as part of the in-school health program[18].

As mentioned earlier in the report, programs for pre-teens and teens have been put into place through recreational opportunities at the MASK (arena/sports complex). Figure/power skating, indoor soccer, Rama minor hockey league and volleyball are some of the sports and recreational activities available to the community's youth. Participation as Firekeepers for the Sacred Fire, Youth Pow-Wow activities, youth counseling or activity circles, summer job opportunities and projects like "Take a Student to Work Day" exemplifies strong interest in community youth.

Biidaaban's prevention and intervention strategies include individual/family conferencing which brings together all those who are involved with a family to help facilitate change and to offer support from all service providers. Each of these circles may take a half-day and involve agencies that work with families in some capacity or another. The benefits are immeasurable in moving people forward to heal. Supported by people in their community who have "come out to support them", has a very meaningful and beneficial effect on individuals because it is an outward manifestation of "caring".

In terms of family and adult activities and aside from adult volleyball, physical fitness (working out) and projects like, "A Night of World Class Football", there are special activities planned throughout the year, such as First Nations Day, which may feature hoop dancers, drum exhibitions, Aboriginal entertainment at the casino tent and fireworks. Activities such as the Daffodil Spring Tea or Potluck Feasts and Socials may be held at the Seniors Complex as a way of bringing the community and the elderly together. Community communication is important. Community meetings are open, well attended and regularly held. Twice a year each department:

"Puts on a display in the gym to inform the community about what is going on. It's a presentation given by each of the departments to tell us what they're all about. All employees and band members are asked to attend. It's totally open to the public."

Biidaaban's programs and activities are featured in the Ojibway Times, a local newspaper that is delivered to each home in the community free of charge, and through community flyers posted in strategic locations (band office, social services bulletin boards, etc.) As part of their commitment to prevention, Biidaaban participates in virtually all community activities and uses the Ojibway Times to call attention to these happenings. Biidaaban publishes healing-directed information that enables the reader, in the privacy of her/his home, to become aware of possible issues regarding abuse, stress, addiction or other unhealthy aspects of one's life. The print media is used as an awareness and trust-building vehicle, which readies the person to come forward for healing.

As part of their prevention and intervention mandate, Biidaaban is highly involved with the community and makes every effort to support on-going activities and programs.

In addition to increased Biidaaban liaison with the judicial system and agencies in the surrounding area, information workshops are presented two or three times a year for those both in and out of the community, police, probation, parole, the judicial system, and provincial government officials. Biidaaban counselors also open the doors to community healing and education by offering various ten-week programs directed to community members. Structured Relapse Prevention and Anger Management are two such examples. Social Services annual two-day conference addresses topics timely to community needs: caring for the care-giver, the Biidaaban healing model, facilitating community action, structured relapse prevention, gambling and addictions, lifting the MASK, and Relationships. An increase of circle activities continues, as statistically detailed in the Appendix E growth comparison chart. Women's and men's circles are consistently conducted throughout the year. Training in workshops and presentations to both First Nations communities as well as to Aboriginal organizations have been on going. Sitting in on the board for Alderville Women's Shelter and other commitments, planning for invitational meetings of elders, like Peter O'chiese, traditional healer and teacher who addressed "Walking in Balance in a Fast Paced Time" and Rupert Ross, Crown Attorney as guest speaker talking about alternative justice to Kendaaswin 7th & 8th graders, all expand the periphery of knowledge, tradition and understanding in the community.

A major milestone for Biidaaban, and a testimony to their credibility in the field of alternative justice, was it being the first Section 84 Agreement under the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act (CCRA)* in Ontario.

Adding to their own personal and staff development and expertise, it is not unusual to find one or two staff members attending weekly evening sessions at the University of Toronto (e.g. Alternative Dispute Resolution, or to attain a degree in Psychology). It should not go unnoticed that Biidaaban staff have families of their own. Their schedule is full, their work is demanding.

BIIDAABAN-DIRECTED BENEFITS AS SEEN BY CLIENTS, COLLEAGUES, OPINION LEADERS

As stated in earlier chapters, Biidaaban is perceived as the "balancer", or "balancing rod" of the community. Others refer to it as "the last bastion of hope", "the heart of the engine (community) - without the heart, the engine fails". These are very powerful descriptors. It is a community and peer indicator of Biidaaban's singular strength in moving the community forward towards wellness by its practice of operating from traditional root values, the principles set forth in its culture-based model.

Some of the following Biidaaban-directed benefits address its value and exemplify some preventative practices targeted to the community.

Practices for strengthening community control - Skill in handling diverse cultures

> "Biidaaban is handling a lot of different people from a lot of different places and this requires real skill. The skill is based on the fact that not everyone is home grown. They may have been born here but have not lived here their whole life. Bill C-31, the legislation that has allowed Aboriginal people who have lost their status due to marriage, adoption, etc.to regain their status, has had a big impact."

> "The staff comes from diverse places. They know how to handle diversity because some of them have come from other First Nation communities. They know what it feels like to move into another reserve. There are people coming to live here who come from different First Nations communities. We're not only getting them, we're also getting all their baggage as well."

"And they're returning with baggage. These are some of the women we're dealing with now. Women who were abused when they left or they may have been abused here and then left. A number of them are returning with those difficulties. But now there's something here to help them to develop and heal."

"I can tell you our reserve is so much better when I compare it with the people who come here from other reserves. We have people we can turn to, like Biidaaban and this makes our community much healthier. We have so much more to offer."

Biidaaban has established some empowering objectives like community education and self-help networking. Community capacity is strengthened; people are more open; secrets are being revealed:

"They're starting not to keep secrets. There are things you tend to sweep under the rug and now they're not doing that. People are actually bringing things out into the open. It has nothing to do with the casino; it has to do with the Biidaaban program. People are starting to talk out loud now about things that they never used to at Rama."

"They're willing to bring in a complaint and identify themselves."

Parenting and family problems are identified and responded to quickly. The resulting action:

"People are more open; they're not afraid to ask questions; they want to learn.

"We had a situation about four-year olds who were engaged in sexual play. Five years ago those parents would not have told a soul. But the one parent called me and we've had some meetings about it and all the other parents wanted me to talk to them and reassure them about it. It would not have come up five years ago. They would have hidden it. They were wanting to get more information about it, like what's normal and what's not normal."

" I've noticed there's more parental interest and cooperation with Biidaaban staff."

"Children are happier."

"More disclosures."

Biidaaban addresses the needs of the whole community in addition to the needs of specific target areas where there may be risk of maltreatment or need for healing and protection:

"Many people now have a better understanding of what it means to heal. A lot of people would be in jail and have no chance of healing or learning about what they had done and how to forgive if it weren't for Biidaaban. They bring them back into the community."

"They deal with the problems of sexual abuse in a such a way, our way (culturally appropriate manner) as to heal the entire community."

"They make people take a look at themselves and ask why they do the things they do, and they try to prevent them from doing it again."

"Biidaaban prevents our people from serving jail sentences so they can heal.
"

"They're there for me. They've got good outreach and they're definitely visible in the community. The counselors easily relate to the people."

"Children are a lot happier. They seem to have more pride in themselves and it shows up with the children."

Biidaaban has increased community sensitivity to caring and sharing. The resulting action - "trust" and healing:

"A more open sense of trust has developed."

"Biidaaban promotes healing with their caring, sharing and positive attitude. Those who have abused need to believe that change is possible. The center of the soul is whole. It is the wrong that has been done, the person should not be judged."

"Biidaaban takes care of you with single counseling, couple counseling or family counseling. They'll refer you. If you don't want anyone to know what you're doing fine, we'll give you a 1-800 number. They're so soft, so kind, they know this system well and they know this community."

"You know you can trust them. You know they care about you and you can go to them whenever you want to. They're always there for you."

"You learn to trust people with your feelings. You get your own feelings out and learn to know what you're feeling. There's been quite a change in our family because just one year ago my son would not have wanted to stay with his dad."

"Their outreach is good. They're there for you. They haven't failed me."

Biidaaban is seen as a role model for the children; for the community

"They provide a role model for our children."

"They're wonderful role models for me."

Biidaaban supports and strengthens the community environment by encouraging:

- Understanding of spiritual and traditional/cultural values, the root of its process;
- High community participation and cooperation;
- Emotional stability;
- Internalization - development of an internal locus of control;
- Social competence - community responsiveness, empathy, caring, flexibility, communication skills, sense of humor;
- Problem solving – seeking help, planning, development of skill sets, critical and creative thinking;
- Responsibility - sense of one's identity, self-awareness, adaptive distancing from negative messages and conditions;
- Forgiveness;
- Goal direction - developing a sense of purpose, a belief in a bright future, usefulness, belonging to a community; and

- Spiritual or religious commitment (a stable belief system).

AND, IF BIIDAABAN WERE NO LONGER HERE, THE PEOPLE SAY:

"Families would be torn apart rather than brought together."

"Our youth would become repeat offenders and end up in the justice system without treatment. I will be honest with you, at first I was not a Biidaaban supporter. I hated the fact that someone could commit a crime and get away with it. But I see it differently now. I see that they (clients) are working on changing their outlook and modifying their behavior. At the same time they are making amends to the people they have hurt and their families. I am now glad Biidaaban is in my community and I hope the workers work themselves out of a job."

"It would undo all the good that this program has instilled in our community. We are still facing new problems, like gambling addiction."

"Any hope for community wellness would be gone. Our men would have to go to jail, and they wouldn't heal there."

SOME CHALLENGES FACING BIIDAABAN:

As Biidaaban continues to grow into its mature cycle, a series of challenges surface:

Severe Time Constraints: a greater number of more serious cases are being handled and this trend appears to be continuing. The caseload has substantially increased over the past year and newer issues are being brought forward. Disclosures have tripled and are on an increasing trend with more people being processed through Biidaaban. Efforts in community prevention programs and activities have been expanded in anticipation of escalating responsibilities resulting from a diverse and increased population (bringing with them their own baggage). This will result in an even greater, more demanding workload making time constraints even more severe. Time becomes a precious commodity and "time schedules somehow or other, are affected by something always coming up and this makes scheduling very difficult".

It is critical that the core work of Biidaaban be continued and sustained on the high quality, effective level it has achieved. Growing responsibilities are putting severe time constraints on the staff. There simply isn't adequate time to handle core responsibilities and at the same time expand into much needed new areas.

Briefly, responsibilities currently include:

- Developing community awareness;
- Making presentations, providing community information, education and outreach;
- Addressing the myriad of community, organization and agency calls requesting information and help;
- Working with children;
- Liaising with the judicial system;
- Making home visits;
- Participating in all community activities;
- Giving workshops and seminars;
- Improving one's own knowledge base;
- Developing and expanding traditional and spiritual resources for the community;
- Completing detailed quarterly reports- data gathering, accounting;
- Handling rising emergencies;
- Administration;
- Publishing, public relations, developing meaningful articles for Ojibway Times, developing flyers, etc.; and
- Time for self-healing work, taking adequate rest and relaxation.

There is no question that with their demanding workload and caring for their own families, that self-healing (a must in the healing industry) is put on the "back burner". Biidaaban staff is selfless in their community efforts, but it is imperative that they, too, have the time and opportunity to devote to their own healing.

> "When you focus outside of yourself and do what you need to do to help others, they need to realize that they, too, need to re-focus and start taking care of themselves"

> "During the training when we developed the model and began to implement it there was considerable focus on our own healing efforts. You had to be healthy yourself, we knew that. As we began to implement and shift into delivery of services, the shift went to

working with others and helping others and increasingly less on self-growth, development and healing. We have to re-focus now."

Biidaaban's severe time constraints are compounded by the fact that casino employees work three shifts around the clock. Scheduling visits/ or visiting homes with clients (or families of) becomes increasingly difficult. The severe time constraints under which Biidaaban operates were pointedly described by Social Services colleagues who freely volunteer their help wherever and whenever they can (attending court, doing case management supervision, full participation in the Gatherings, etc.). It is important to note that Social Services have all been Biidaaban trained and consider themselves to be Biidaaban, but they operate, in a sense, like volunteers because they are funded differently and have their own job descriptions and job responsibilities to perform.

Biidaaban's core capacity clearly needs to be strengthened with the addition of at least two more core staff. Otherwise, important aspects of the work - programs or projects that are beginning to take root and benefit community wellness - may need to be reduced, eliminated or may not be given the full attention required. Thus splintered time constraints or fragmentation could result. Much needed rest and relaxation and staff self-healing work is necessary to keep the staff in balance. Moving in and out of multiple client energies and the nature of Biidaaban work itself necessitates continual self-healing. The staff recognizes the need, but discounts it in lieu of other time pressures related to their workload. Additional training, certification for areas of specialization and getting degrees may be waitlisted or take longer to achieve.

Without the increased capacity of at least two additional core staff workers (one, perhaps a male to accommodate male client needs and to communicate in male language) the certainty exists that Biidaaban's demanding workload will become even more demanding as time goes on. Concerns regarding fragmentation will become real and the four core staff will find it increasingly difficult to proactively meet or anticipate changing community needs. Biidaaban's integrity, expertise, caring, commitment and value to the community cannot be overstated. Every effort must be made to sustain and expand their work.

As a point of order, additional administration help is also needed to alleviate the mounting growth of paper work that accommodates funders' informational expectations such as quarterly reports, presentations, proposals, data-gathering, monthly articles/flyers for the Ojibway Times, etc.

"The paper work is becoming very binding and utilizes their skills and talents in ways other than in their healing realms, as counselors."

"They are inundated with work. They can do a far better and more effective job if they can concentrate more in depth on the necessary healing. Now they must take away from one project and give to another when the need arises. How they manage to do this with $128,000 is unreal. They should not have to worry where their next dollar is coming from. They need more counselors to do the effective job they are capable of doing."

A New Social Dynamic: is being created which will increase the challenges faced by Biidaaban in the near and distant future. New issues address different needs. Increasingly, both men and women in a family now work. This has an effect on personal relationships, decision-making, money management and child rearing. Commitments are changing and time constraints are being experienced in the home. Stress is increasing. Theft, fraud, debt, misuse of credit cards, addictive gambling, elements of racism, money management and greed are issues which are beginning to surface as is the use of harder drugs (cocaine and ecstasy). Compounding this, an increasing number of people of diverse cultural and economic backgrounds are migrating into Mnjikaning or nearby areas and, as stated earlier, they are "bringing their baggage with them".

This means that Biidaaban must anticipate, plan and take a proactive (rather than a reactive) stance to ready themselves and to effectively address these newer issues. It is predictive that with an already demanding workload, staff pressures or stress will increase.

Funding Considerations: Biidaaban is seriously affected by some funders' lack of knowledge and understanding regarding Biidaaban and the real and sustaining values of alternative justice and wellness that it brings forth to the local and global community. Funders must become more sensitive to and learn about and respect Mnjikaning's worldview in order to begin to legitimize their alternative healing strategies and their role in traditional practices and healing. They must recognize tht their fiduciary responsibility to Biidaaban is based on its values to its immediate community, as well as the larger community. Beliefs or assumptions based on the monetary benefits derived from casino monies should not be a factor. Rather, the movement toward Aboriginal self-government, what Aboriginal peoples can do for themselves, the support which is necessary here and now, and the effectiveness of Biidaaban's work are the real

considerations. These are the values that show respect and honor to Biidaaban for their commitment to the Aboriginal community.

Reinforcing this stance again, funding must be Biidaaban-focused, not casino focused. It needs to be based solely on their work, effort and results that heal the community through their work in Aboriginal alternative justice from their worldview.

This also means that Biidaaban must be taken out of the political fray and participatory efforts must be made to protect the value of their work.

> "Every effort must be made to remove Biidaaban from the political fray, out of the political situation. They should be viewed for the work they do. They should not be affected by the politics of the day. Their work is too important."

> "Something must be done and I don't know what, to keep them a-political. It should not be a political concern. Why should a new council have any affect on them, why should politics conflict with government funding, why shouldn't they be taken out of these concerns for something that so is so important to the community".

Importantly, funding formulas must also be more flexible in order to accommodate re-allocation of resources without interruptions in the healing process. Specifically, in terms of recent Biidaaban experiences, psychological counseling hours were cut back and through stringent government formulas were difficult to retrieve without a gap-delay of a few weeks. This has serious consequences to the person being counseled. Application for renewal time must be done in a way to avoid time lapses, to continue the therapy in order to obtain client/therapist consistency. In the counseling situation time gaps can be especially hurtful, especially in serious cases. Biidaaban's escalating role from less serious to more serious cases has changed, however, funding patterns have remained rigid and insensitive. Biidaaban's caseload of serious cases is growing and clients now require longer-term psychological counseling and a continuity of services in order to ensure healing. As Dr. Connors reports:

> "Medical Services Branch (MSB) funding, which Biidaaban uses for psychological counseling of clients, has only been approved for a maximum of 15 hours. Client hours were reduced to 15. With serious cases another 10 hours may possibly be approved if argued that the service is necessary and will leave the person in a state of crisis if the

counseling is stopped. The people we're getting now require at least 30 hours. They are sexual abusers and you are only getting started with them and then you're cut off. The situation is problematic because when we run out of funding from MSB, the only way that clients can receive the services they need is if its funded through Biidaaban and Biidaaban doesn't really have the dollars to do that. We're dealing with issues of serious sexual abuse and the time I generally spend with them has been over a year. That's both for offenders and those who have been assaulted. But we're only getting paid half that time now. Funding needs to be more realistic. Biidaaban is working with clients for about 2 years on an average. Out of that time the amount of counseling time we get covered is usually a period of six months. The better way to do it is to recognize what the needs are and provide continuity of services."

Crowns Move Around: a continuing issue faced by Biidaaban is that Crown Attorneys move around frequently because Mnjikaning is in a satellite area and Crowns serve a number of communities. Just as the Crown gets to know Biidaaban and their work, he/she is moved to another location. This instability disallows the justice system to become fully familiarized with Biidaaban's work and necessitates continual education or re-training. It also weakens the strength of the program because it takes time away from the client and requires that his/her case be thoroughly understood. The re-connection to a new Crown takes considerable time and forces Biidaaban to double its efforts (and expend more time) to provide needed information and to close these gaps.

This area requires some study especially in circumstances where communities are moving forward into alternative healing strategies and, in Mnjikaning's case, towards the goal of self-government.

Denial By Person Who Has Harmed - A Refusal To Heal: the fact that disclosures have tripled and continue to increase is strong evidence of community trust in Biidaaban. Community members are empowered, more open and freer in voicing their own interest in healing themselves and some say they'll do "whatever it takes".

However, the residual effects of colonialism still permeate and there is a segment of people who still believe that giving information away (to dominant society) is giving away one's power or spirit and may serve as a deterrent for healing. As one man indicates:

> "People are still scared of it. Indians like to hide things and they're not very good at disclosing about themselves because they believe it's a spiritual thing. So people don't want to give information away. They feel their spirit is being broken down. It interferes with an Indian's personal space, which is precious. So people are slow in accepting it because we have been so fragmented by the past. That's what made me so leery about the program at the start." (now strongly believes in Biidaaban)

Beyond the casino's benefit of monetary rewards and resulting self-esteem, a growing awareness and deeper need to heal one's self is emerging in the community, not just to keep one's job and care for one's family, but also to personally relate in healthier ways to one's children, one's partner, one's family and to live a better, safer and fuller life. The skill sets taught to people by Biidaaban and social services are beginning to take root and people in the community are beginning to know how to address their own issues as similar or repeated circumstances arise.

On the other side of the coin, those who rigidly hold onto their secrets and refuse to admit to the harm they have caused others, tend to find it even more difficult to relinquish control, particularly in an environment of monetary abundance, which "hides the harm". Rather than being open to healing, those who fear reprisal from disclosures try to undermine Biidaaban's work. Their silence deepens and to protect themselves, they speak out against Biidaaban, "to try to squash it". The person "feels" even more threatened in the presence of healthy people.

> "Ill people don't feel good around people who are healthy. Particularly those who are healing others."

The tendency to rationalize was shown by comments such as these in the interviews: "all is well, look around you, we have the casino, no one thinks this is a reserve, we have houses, cars. Everything's all right." While in the minority, these people tend to be very vocal. A common statement heard among practitioners of alternative justice, is that when one person is in denial, entire families and close friends also go into denial as a support measure for the person, thus exacerbating the problem and thwarting alternative justice healers. Comments like, "There are people that are still leery. They don't know what to think of Biidaaban." are reported. Until critical mass occurs and the community heals substantially, these reactions may be expected to continue. It is part of the working conditions and part of the growing pains of prevention. The situation becomes more challenging should those in denial hold political office.

- For some, healing will take considerable time, as will the re-structuring and de-sensitizing effects of colonialism.
- "Restructuring and de-sensitizing our people" to the effects of colonialism to heal these persons (those in denial) takes time."
- Community information/education and healing circles/workshops will continue to strengthen community understanding of these behaviors and mental health issues. It will dispel the myths that are perpetuated in situations such as that described above.

It is important to reiterate that in greater and greater numbers, those who have gone through the Biidaaban process, praise it and is typified by this comment:

> "At first I didn't want to go through the Biidaaban program, but I knew I needed to. I'm a graduate of Biidaaban. I had a real anger problem for a long time. Being a single father, Biidaaban has really helped me with my boy. The talking and planning has helped me. I took it all out on my family in my home life and misdirected my anger.
>
> "The program is very beneficial to the community although a lot of people are still leery of it because it breaks the stereotypes. People hate to admit they're the ones who need the healing and that they need to take responsibility for it. Being accountable is a major step and healing the community just doesn't happen overnight. I didn't want to be to my son what my father was to me."

A Strong, Unified Team approach becomes even more critical in a time of rapid change. As stated earlier, the Biidaaban core staff and health and social services are all Biidaaban workers. Being together (physically) in one place (the MASK) provides the opportunity for greater unity, communication, availability and utilization of resources. The richness of teamwork benefits everyone. Workers are easily informed regarding issues which quickly arise, additional assistance for clients can be achieved quickly, more circle activity occurs, closer proximity to each other helps avoid duplication of services and funding issues are more easily resolved. The old parcel-out-pieces approach is no longer operative. Wholeness can be achieved. All agree:

> "It's much better when we're all together. It filters through all of us."

However, Biidaaban and social services have outgrown their office space. What Biidaaban initially thought would be an appropriate central place in which to work and to hold circles, has become out-dated. The floor plan enables people to walk freely through the area where circles and meetings are held. Use of the copy or fax machine also causes interruptions. Client privacy is jeopardized. There are no private counseling rooms and the office cubicles are separated, with open panels at the top. In two cases Biidaaban staff share an office with another person, again reducing client privacy. Some offices and the boardroom are in an outer hall, which further separates or isolates, rather than unifies workers.

It is critical that the group remain together (in new quarters). Group unity must transcend physical floor plan limitations. As much as is possible, holism should prevail. The environment Biidaaban presents to clients must be one of teamwork and group unity, all working openly and heartily together.

The staff recognizes these issues and a move to another place is under consideration. Key to the move and its floor plan is a truth that has important implications to the group and the work being done. It is shared by Dr.Connors:

> "Holistic healing is the healing of mind, heart, body and spirit (or soul) that needs to come together as one and needs to be understood as one."

As the phrase above implies, there is no separation. It is the oneness that Biidaaban and social services must continue to work at to achieve. The oneness does not separate or compartmentalize. All healing elements come together in a protected circle.

There are creative ways in which new offices can be designed to achieve a cultural and spiritual sensitivity and environment - perhaps a protected center circle in which pipe ceremonies and circles may be held. If this is not possible in the coming new quarters, Biidaaban and social services must transcend the limitations of physical separation, making even stronger efforts to strive for group unity.

Expansion of Resources: it should be mentioned that a Healing Lodge or Spiritual Center is under discussion, but at the time of fieldwork was not crystallized. A component of the Lodge would deal with Justice or particularly with youth. This could be a residential facility, which

would accept other First Nations peoples for healing and in that way, expand to other First Nations. This is in harmony with in-migration patterns and community visioning.

Another possible direction may be for a Nechi-type expansion, which would have a research or teaching component. Comments from counselors indicated a desire to expand resources in these possible directions.

A healing Lodge may also offer Aboriginal resources on-reserve to house and care for clients and their families for given periods of time for healing purposes. The above concepts were loosely described as possible considerations. Whatever direction taken, Biidaaban's and social services central place of work should be synchronized with the developing concept and in cultural/traditional harmony and balance to strengthen the holistic meanings of healing in the community.

Possible Duplication of Efforts - The Youth Justice Plan: a possible conflict of interest or duplication of efforts seems likely to exist between Youth Justice and Biidaaban which could weaken the unity of important young offender programs, youth being a growing national concern. While this issue was not studied in depth during the interviews, signals of possible duplicated efforts surfaced between Youth Justice and Biidaaban and would seem to require further study.

Based on commentary derived in the interview, Youth Justice appears to be focusing their youth efforts on young children and young pre-teens. Older teens and young adults appear to be in Biidaaban's jurisdiction. The title, "Youth Justice" appears to suggest a conflict with what the Biidaaban process is all about, "Alternative Justice". This requires further investigation because it suggests confusion and implies similarities exist.

It is important to recognize that a young offender program is important to the community, since youth would be treated at home. With an increased number of youth expected to come into the community as a result increasing migration patterns, efforts for Biidaaban to naturally expand its healing process to youth would benefit the family and community. It is critical for young offenders (and their families) to go through the Biidaaban healing process.

This is a challenge, which requires resolving for a few reasons:

- Criminology experts anticipate higher crime rates among the younger Aboriginal population. The challenge of dealing with youth-related issues in the next ten years is becoming evident. Cases with youth are different, more difficult, more time consuming and more costly. So as the population of young Aboriginal men continues to increase over the next 10 years, CSC foresees "dramatic increases" amounting possibly to a doubling proportion of prisoners who are Aboriginal.
- Statistics Canada released figures showing that the proportion of Aboriginal prisoners admitted to federal penitentiaries has increased by 6% since 1991, representing a thin edge of an Aboriginal baby boom that is now reaching maturity;
- New legislation in Ontario called " Alternative Measures for Young Offenders" now exists. Biidaaban would seem to be the most likely group to implement this because Biidaaban has an established history of credibility with the courts, has a proven track record and is successful in its healing model which required time, diligence, training, performance, blending and proven accountability. It would seem that a young offenders program "fits" as an integral part of the Biidaaban healing process. Further, putting these young people through the process, even as part of a diversion, would also have a positive effect on their families who would also go through the process. It is a three-pronged formidable approach, the teaching and learning of which will benefit families and the entire community as well as the youth. Because Biidaaban has a proven record and no recidivism of its clients, the likelihood for funding would also seem greater. The issue of young offenders is increasing in importance throughout Canada.
- Biidaaban's credentials are critical to support this up coming, growing need. As cited by David Cayley[19]: "Under these circumstances, finding alternatives for the revolving door of the criminal justice system is obviously URGENT." He continues by stating,

"It is one of the surest laws of criminology that young men commit more crimes than any other segments of the population, so as the population of young Aboriginal men continues to increase, so does the need."

Putting a youth diversion program into effect will enable the community to take control of its youth. The process would need to insist on resolution over time, provide treatment for the young offender and have those who have harmed and the people who have been harmed dialogue and receive treatment. The process, most importantly, will keep offender names off a central registry.

Volunteers: at one time, it was understood that there were approximately 34 or more volunteers assisting in the Biidaaban process. The numbers have declined sharply and volunteerism appears especially difficult to retain. It is recognized that volunteers are important to retain in the process because they provide the community net, which guides, strengthens and protects those who have harmed and those who were harmed.

However, it appears that with the staggered working hours of the casino, both moms and dads working, greater time commitments among parents, salaried occupations and Biidaaban's severe time constraints, that a re-evaluation of how volunteerism could operate in the community would have to be addressed. It would clearly be unlike other reserves whose community members are largely unemployed. It may be that volunteerism may have to become part of the reintegration plan - the Gathering, retaining much larger lists of volunteers who are committed but who may not serve as frequently. Initial and follow-up training would be essential and needed on a continuous basis. Perhaps community healing certificates (or some kind of diploma that identifies the volunteer as a healthy contributor to community wellness) or some other return of honor might be established as an "inner" reward for the volunteer.

Unless volunteers can work side by side with Biidaaban workers, learning and refreshing their skills, it would be highly unlikely in a semi-urban-highly employed environment that many would want to volunteer. Therefore, creative approaches, a high degree of training and perhaps compensation may be some issues to address to put an effective volunteer program into place.

The Challenge of a Global Community: one of the main challenges the people of Mnjikaning will face is how to create a healthy global community in the future. Mnjikaning is evolving into a global community in the sense that people are coming back into the community to live, work and play and many of these people come from different cultures and different economic backgrounds.

The challenge faced by the community is *how to develop a new community structure that will be all-inclusive and would be accepting of different people from different cultures.*

A long-standing struggle among community members is the feeling of being "overwhelmed" by outsiders coming in. The few community members who adhere to this philosophy are almost militant in their point of view.

CHAPTER 5

PROFILE OF THE BIIDAABAN WORKER

The four core members of Biidaaban bring to the community a depth and breadth of education and experience which go beyond community descriptors of "warmth", "caring", "sharing " and "kindness". The staff's deep level of commitment manifests through a solid background of training and professional experience, as well as through on-going efforts to expand their capabilities as community needs develop, increase or change.

The Biidaaban staff collectively brings 64 years of skills, training and experience to the community. They hope to obtain additional staff to increase capacity, sustain Biidaaban's core strength, expand into other related areas and provide opportunities for self-healing to maintain balance in their demanding work load. This small group of four women has demonstrated support of Mnjikaning's vision to move the community forward into self-government through their sustained efforts in traditional and contemporary healing in alternative justice and participatory interaction with the justice system.

As the appended statistics indicate (Appendices D and E), Biidaaban's activities have escalated substantially from 1999-2000. The analysis of "one typical offender" illustrates the almost 400 hours spent with one client over a two year period. Quarterly reports, a sample of which follows, are comprehensive in detailing their demanding workload.

QUARTERLY REPORT EDITED EXAMPLE:

Biidaaban Philosophy[20]

Biidaaban is a community based, holistic healing model, the philosophy of which is based on First Nation knowledge of healing. Rather than punishment, the idea is based on restoring balance in the lives of those in the community who are affected by abuse. The process encourages the person who has abused to witness the pain they have inflicted, admit the wrong they have caused and make amends to the person and families they have violated. The underlying premise is that the person is "whole", his/her spirit is "whole", but the

person has gotten temporarily out of balance by the wrongs committed. Restoration is to the wholeness of the person. Biidaaban encourages healing of the person who has abused, the person who has been abused, the family and the community.

Key contact people and agencies involved in Biidaaban, *which, for this report excludes continuous contact with Chief and Council and Federal personnel.*

Core Staff:

Leanne McRae Douglas	Coordinator
Pennie Williams-Louttit	Animator
Dawn Ireland Noganosh	Wellness Coordinator
Deanna Shilling	Wellness Coordinator

Gga Wiidookaadmin Social Services Staff: all have had two years Biidaaban training; while social services have their own job responsibilities and are funded differently. They interact with, are supportive of and provide additional trained resources to Biidaaban - going to court; participating in ceremonies, case management activities, sentencing circles, etc.

Christine Douglas	Manager
Lana Shilling	Administrative Assistant
Stephanie Sandy	Social Counsellor/Case Management Supervisor
Byron Stiles	Gambling/Addictions Coordinator
Cathie Cunningham	Youth Justice Worker
Liette Snache	NNADAP

Consultant

Dr. Edward Connors	Psychologist

Traditional Therapists:

Roger Jones	Elder
Lee Maracle	
Hector Copegog	Elder

Biidaaban accountability, as reported in their comprehensive Quarterly Reports, demonstrates their accomplishments in a consistent format of seven activity categories, illustrating the depth and breadth of their work. As might be expected, some quarters indicate a heavier, more demanding workload than others (depending on the number of disclosures, emergencies which arise, the number of presentations being made, meetings or liaison with the justice system, etc.). The following illustrates work entailed in one typical quarter. It helps to delineate the 400 working hours with one client, as seen in Appendix E, and gives insight into the specific patterns of activity: Biidaaban Circles; Treatment Groups; Community Outreach (Education and Prevention); Justice Related Activities, Training Program Development, Presentations or Workshops and Future Activities.[21]

A. Project Activities:

Biidaaban Circles: a total of 16 circles, with a total of 84 participants, were conducted from July to September 1999 (See Appendix E Statistics and quarterly report July-Sept. 1999). Activities and workloads differ quarter to quarter and are dependent upon client placement, progress and healing requirements. In the third quarter of 2000, for example, a total of 66 circles were conducted as the Sentencing Circle/Gathering neared. Biidaaban circles do not include individual counselling. In the July-September, '99 quarter, case reviews for court reports, client support and consultation and client co-therapy resulted in 16 circles, comprised of:

- Individual circles;
- Group support sessions;
- Client/therapist work;
- Case review/four month case review;
- Client with probation;
- Several client sessions;
- Healing circle;
- Family circle.

Case Management: entails meetings with service providers to discuss case development, client progress, need identification, requests for assistance, etc. The following types of meetings took place from July to September 1999:

- Crown attorney-with/without client;
- Sentencing circle planning session;
- Social services team meetings;
- Traditional healer consultations;
- Biidaaban and Mnjikaning Chief;
- Team meeting regarding disclosure;
- Biidaaban team meetings;
- Meeting with Mnjikaning police;
- Meeting with probation officer;
- Team meeting with Dr. Ed. Connors;
- Conference call with Children's Aid.

In this quarter, there were no ***Mini-or Community Gatherings.*** The former are similar to community gatherings, without the entire community's attendance; the latter brings together all who are affected by the abuse. Mini Gatherings are used to look at the provision of immediate treatment in the interim before a community gathering is held. The community is informed and invited to attend. The person who has abused takes responsibility and apologizes for his/her behavior. A treatment/restitution plan is developed and signed.

B. **Treatment Groups:**

- A community-sharing circle is held every Monday night at the Satellite Daycare center. Everyone in the community is welcome to attend;
- Women's Support Groups are held weekly;
- Anger Management is offered to two clients on an individual basis;
- Structured Relapse Prevention for women (10 week program) was completed;
- Elder Roger Jones offered traditional healing and ceremonies to individuals, groups and families two days each in August and September.

C. **Community Outreach: Education and Prevention----Biidaaban:**

- Organized traditional teachings with Elder Roger Jones for the community;
- Assisted in the coordination of the Thanksgiving Pow Wow;
- Assisted in the Annual Health Fair;

- Assisted in the community feast and ceremony for the Wampum Belt, traveling to various communities to promote wellness (e.g. diabetes - "your blood is too sweet");
- Conducted a full moon ceremony for women and children;
- Held a "Finding Your Voice" workshop (healing through your voice). Workshop will be held regularly each month;
- Hosted Elder Roger Jones' presentation on the significance of Traditional naming.

D. **Justice Related Activities - Biidaaban - Every effort is made to continually build relationships with the criminal justice system and other communities:**

- Met with Chief and Council to establish support for sentencing circles to be held in the community;
- Attended the quarterly Biidaaban Advisory Committee (BAC) Meeting;
- Along with the Chief and Social Services Staff, met with defense lawyers to plan and discuss up-coming hearing in court regarding sentencing circles;
- Testified in provincial court regarding the merits of a sentencing circle in Mnjikaning. In attendance were the Biidaaban team, Social Services and the Chief, Biidaaban later met with Chief and Council to brief them and prepare for the upcoming sentencing circle;
- Met with Council, Band manager and Communications to complete details regarding the upcoming sentencing circle;
- Social Services met with Rupert Ross;
- Bi-monthly meeting with the Crown Attorney, regarding progress report of cases and discussion of new cases within the court system;
    - Attended court several occasions throughout the quarter to represent and support clients involved in the Biidaaban process;
    - Two meetings with Crown Attorney and Mnjikaning police to develop protocol between Biidaaban and Mnjikaning police.

E. **Training/Program Development:**

- July 26-30 Biidaaban staff and Social Services participated in Wellness Training and Peace Making & Conflict Resolution facilitated by Billy Rogers, Okalahoma University;

- Attended motivational seminar with Brian Tracy, Sept. 14;

- Met with Children's Aid Workers in participatory sharing of information regarding available programs - (Biidaaban and Social Services teams);
- Social Services team met with Youth Probation workers to develop relations and share information about Biidaaban services.

F. <u>Presentations/Workshops/Newsletters:</u>

- A two-day Information Workshop was conducted July 8-9 with community members; Mnjikaning police constables, Band Councillors and guests from other First Nations communities;
- Presentation to 40 Crown Attorney's and Policy Makers from across Ontario, September 29; and
- Newsletter attachments detailing Biidaaban's articles published in the Ojibway Times Newsletters are included in every quarterly report.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES:

Future activities anticipates community needs over the next three months, cites on-going activities such as healing circles with health and social services, community work with families, preparation for community gatherings to be conducted in the fall and identifies calendar dates for events that have been scheduled for the next quarter. (e.g. Sentencing Circle, October 4; traditional elder/healer Diane Longboat, community gathering in November).

Biidaaban Advisory Committee meetings

Some future considerations:

1. Based on the success of section 84 agreement (as a result of Biidaaban), the possibility exists that Biidaaban could become part of a larger process under section 81 space because Correctional Service Canda (CSC) is considering non-facility based custody. This is possible because Mnjikaning is considered by police to be a "safe" community (one criteria for selection).
2. Pre-charge diversion is an important option. This would be a process in which the sentencing circle is held in the community and is possible because of the respect and

credibility Biidaaban has generated for its work and its relationship with the judicial system.

3. Study of traditional and clinical approaches to sex offender treatment in communities is of interest to the Biidaaban team.
4. Interim treatment plans provide a trial run to determine whether or not the client is committed to the process, thus helping to protect Biidaaban credibility. The treatment plan is presented to the crown along with a four-month report and has been working effectively since its implementation.
5. A variety of treatment options are offered: structured relapse prevention, anger management, a psychologist that incorporates traditions into treatment, as well as traditional healing.
6. Traditional elders refer to a sentencing circle as a cleansing circle (emphasizing the removal of the issues or problems-i.e. to cleanse).

STAFF EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING

To provide some highlights into Biidaaban's core strength, a brief profile of staff [22] experience and training, collectively and individually, is highlighted, but by no means fully describes the entirety of the educational background, training or work experience they bring to the community.

Analysis of the core staff's education, training and experience indicates that a strong base exists to address multiple community needs - areas of healing and teaching. Staff competency enables Biidaaban to meet the changing needs of a culturally diverse, growing community. The staff is adept in the healing arts, which enables them to readily step in and out of emerging community wellness issues or situations. This requires a multitude of skills and expertise. Collectively, staff educational and professional backgrounds reflect attendance in or completion of studies from highly accredited universities, colleges and well-regarded organizations specifically related to sexual abuse, crime prevention and intervention, addictions, child and family issues and alternative justice. Members of the team have either attained completion of a university degree, or are working towards it. All have received certification or qualifying diplomas in community justice and other specialized areas.

Prior to describing staff education, training and experience, it would be pertinent to describe the high standards by which a Biidaaban staff person must be qualified. Mnjikaning criteria

demands that each team member must have:

- A minimum of two years training in Biidaaban or other community justice healing models;
- Post secondary education in the social services field or equivalent;
- A minimum of three years practical counseling experience;
- Ability to contribute and work in a positive "team" environment;
- Ability to liaise with various levels of government;
- Coordination and organizational skills;
- Excellent communication skills; and
- The flexibility to work evenings.

Biidaaban core staff work together as a team under the umbrella of Gga Wiidookaadmin Community and Family Services.

It is interesting to observe that importing people into the community to teach, heal, etc. is still being practiced. This was evidenced by staff attended workshops and by bringing the facilitators/healers/teachers to share their learning with the community.

Their educational and professional background reflects completion of studies in accredited universities, colleges and highly regarded organizations specifically related to alternative justice, sexual abuse, crime prevention, addictions and child/family wellness.

Collectively, they either hold university degrees and/or are in the process of obtaining them. All have obtained certification or qualifying diplomas in specialized areas.

Universities, Colleges, Specific Training Institutions/Organizations Attended:

University of Toronto, Athabasca University/Laurentian University - (distance learning education); University of Windsor/Iona College, Confederated College of Applied Arts, Georgian College, Loyalist College NTI, University of Oklahoma, Trent University, Nechi Institute, Addictions Research Foundation, Waseskun Healing Center, Dr. Ed Connors (Biidaaban development, staff healing, training); Dr. Cruz Aceverdo, Sexual Abuse in Native Communities.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

Collectively, the following represents over 3,000 hours of training and education achieved among the four core workers in the past three years.

BIIDAABAN-SPECIFIC

- Part One: The Community Healing Model
- Part Two: Protocol training and Preparation for Implementation
- Biidaaban Training- Facilitation Training for Orientation of New Members

CHILDREN/YOUTH

- Early Childhood Education/Day Care
- Early Childhood Education Diplomas
- Street Proofing Our Children - sexual abuse assessment and strategies with young children and their families training

THERAPLAY THERAPY - (2 WORKING TOWARDS CERTIFICATION)

- Healing with Children- An Introduction to Healing Approaches with Children, Youth & Families
- Rainbows- grief and loss therapy
- Youth substance abuse training
- Understanding Child Sexual Abuse in First Nations training

COUNSELING CERTIFICATES/DIPLOMAS OBTAINED:

CERTIFIED NATIVE COUNSELLOR

- CGC - Certified Gambling Counsellor - Canadian Society of Counsellors & Therapists

HEALING WITH CHILDREN

- Suicide Intervention
- Play Therapy for Sexually Abused Children
- Dale Carnegie, public speaking
- Facilitation Training

FAMILY/COMMUNITY

- Life Skills Training
- Finding Peace and Resolving Conflict, Univ. of Oklahoma
- Alternative Dispute Resolution, University of Toronto

GAMBLING ADDICTION

- Addictions Research Foundation - Problems & Compulsive Gambling teleconference; Orientation to Problems and Compulsive Gambling; Realities of Problem and Compulsive Gambling; Cognitive Treatment for Problem Gamblers; Advanced Training on Gambling Addictions
- Treating Victims of Compulsive Gambling
- Canadian Council on Compulsive Gambling - Bridging the Gap conference; Bi-Annual Conference
- Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling - Past, Present & Future
- American Council on Problem Gambling
- Nutritional Recovery: The Complete Strategy for Combating Addictions
- Gambling Awareness - Nechi Institute
- The Invisible Disease- Compulsive Gambling: Recognizing Gambling Issues for the Alcoholic/Drug Addicted Client

ADDICTION

- Structured Relapse Prevention

MATRICULATION FOR DEGREE

- Psychology – University of Toronto - 2 Biidaaban *workers*

JUDICIAL

- Police Governing Authority Training
- Ontario Provincial Police General Headquarters: Police Conference on Community Justice
- Crises Intervention Training

MEN'S WELLNESS

- Men's Wellness Conference
- Women's Wellness Conference
- Because You're Worth It
- 7th Women & Wellness Annual Conference
- Powerful Communication Skills for Women
- Sex Offender/Sexual Abuse
- Sex Offender Treatment Workshop - Waseskun Healing Center
- Suicide " Searching for Strength"
- Sexual Abuse in Native Communities (Dr. Cruz Aceverdo)

TRAIN THE TRAINER WORKSHOPS (NOT COVERED IN OTHER AREAS)

- Native Wellness Trainer - University of Oklahoma
- Community Justice Circle
- Lifting the Oppression

DIPLOMAS

- Social Services Diploma Program - First Nations Technical Institute
- Early Childhood Education

GENERAL: OTHER

- Evaluation workshop

COMPUTER

- Microsoft/ Word, levels 1 & 2

AWARDS/ACHIEVEMENTS/MEMBERSHIPS/INTERESTS:

Remarkable Woman Award; Dean's List (re: early childhood education) Mnjikaning Elementary School Board Trustee; Canadian Society of Counsellors and Therapists; published writer, traditional/contemporary dancer, visual traditional/contemporary artist, Board of Directors - Police Governing Authority, Rama; Radio Rama Board, Fundraising.

To illustrate police support of Biidaaban, they have included Biidaaban in their business plan along with regular core activities, such as the Rider Program.

PROGRAM FACILITATION IN MNJIKANING:

- From Victim to Survivor, A group treatment model for women survivors of incest
- Positive Traditional parenting Program
- Personal Safety and Decision making Curriculum - a Violence Prevention Curriculum (Kendaaswin)

BIIDAABAN PRESENTATIONS - 1998-2000:

Biidaaban/The Mnjikaning Community Healing Model, presented to:

- International Symposium on Victimology
- Pic River First Nation
- Sagamok First Nation
- Aboriginal Crime Prevention Conference
- Bear Island First Nation

- Native Women and Wellness Conference East
- Ontario Provincial Police General Headquarters: Police Conference on Community Justice; Strengthening Community Responsibility
- Gga Wiidookaadmin Community & Family Services Annual Conference
- Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General
- The Prosecution Service, The Criminal Justice System and the Millennium

CARING FOR THE CAREGIVER

- Restorative Justice Workshop
- Gga Wiidookaadmin Community & Family Services Annual Conference
- Ontario Native Education Counsellors Annual Conference

FROM VICTIM TO SURVIVOR - A GROUP TREATMENT MODEL FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF INCEST

- Gga Wiidookaadmin Community & Family Services

NATIVE APPROACH TO ADDICTIONS:

- Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling: Bridging the Gap Conference

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES, PRESENTED TO:

- Continuing Education for the Province of Quebec: Judges
- 10th International Symposium on Victimology
- Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General
- Continuing Education for Crown Attorneys
- Georgian College Post Diploma Addictions Program
- Owen Sound Native Friendship Centre
- Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling Annual Conference

- Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling Annual Conference

In conclusion, Dr. William Marshall's words resonate:

> "If we have learned anything from the errors of our past it ought to be that Aboriginal Peoples should have control over their own destiny and over their own problems. Indeed, we should have the good sense to learn from Aboriginal ways. Certainly their way of dealing with offenders of all types could teach us as much as we are likely to teach them."[23]

To the Biidaaban staff,

chi Meegwetch

APPENDIX A

PERSONS WHO HAVE ABUSED
CHARGES - POSSIBLE SENTENCES - ACTUAL SENTENCES
(based on 44 Abusers)

PERSON	CHARGED	POSSIBLE SENTENCE	ACTUAL SENTENCE
1. Male	Domestic Assault	2 years +	60 days- week-ends
2. Female	Domestic Assault	6 months	Stay (Diverted)
3. Male	Domestic Assault with weapon Robbery and Weapon Sexual Assault	8 years	2 years in treatment Outstanding
4. Male	Domestic Assault	2 years less a day	6 months / weekends
5. Male	Sexual Assault of Minor	2+ years	6 months
6. Male	Sexual Assault Sexual Interference	2+ years	5 months, 2 years probation
7. Male	Sexual Assault of minor	2+ years	6 months
8. Male	YO Break and Enter	Open custody	Probation
9. *Male	Kidnapping Sexual Assault Assault and Weapon	8 Years	Released early to community instead of halfway house
10. Male	Break and Enter Theft Under	2 years less a day	Stay
11. Male	Domestic Assault (3) with weapon	2+ years charges not laid	6 months in treatment
12. *Male	Sexual Assault	Assisted in early parole 18 months	4 years
13. Female	Assault Causing Bodily Harm Breech of Undertaking	18 months	Fine, 3 years parole
14. Male	Domestic Assault	Chose not to participate	

PERSON	CHARGED	POSSIBLE SENTENCE	ACTUAL SENTENCE
15. Male	Domestic Assault	2 years less a day	6 months house arrest
16. Male	Sexual Assault Sexual Interference		Conditional - sentence to community
17. Male	Assault and Weapon	18 months	3 months
18. Female	Shoplifting	Fine	Diverted
19. Female	Theft over $5000 Breech of Trust	2 years +	Conditional sentence to community
20. Female	Young Offender Assault	30 days open custody probation	Diverted
21. Female	Theft over $5,000 Breech of Trust	2 years +	Conditional sentence to community
22. Male	Sexual Assault	2 years	No charges laid
23. Male	Assault	6 months probation	Diverted
24. Male	Impaired - 3 counts	1 year	Weekends
25. Female	Theft under Breech of Trust	2 years less a day	Diverted
26. Male	Sexual Assault	2 years	No charges laid
27. Male	Sexual Assault	2 years less a day	Diverted
28. Male	Sexual Assault	2 years less a day	6 months, 3 years probation
29. Male	Domestic Assault	2 years less a day	80 days served on weekends, 2 years probation
30. Male	Assault	2 years less a day	Diverted
31. Male	Domestic	60 days	Stay of charges
32. Male	Sexual Assault Assisted after release. *Did not accept responsibility until after found guilty	2 years less a day	2 years less a day
33. Male	Domestic	60 days	20 days

PERSON	CHARGED	POSSIBLE SENTENCE	ACTUAL SENTENCE
34. Male	Impaired Breach of Probation	Biidaaban refused after 4 month interim treatment	Fine, 4 months
35. Male	Domestic	2 years less a day	2 years probation
36. Male	Sexual Assault with Minor	2 + years	Unresolved
37. Male	Domestic	Biidaaban refused. Received assistance through other workers.	
38. Male	Domestic	Chose not to participate	
39. Male*	Sexual Assault		2 years less a day
40. Male	Assault/Break and Enter Drug Charge Breach	2 + years	Reduced 1 year + probation
41. Male	Assault Break and Enter Drug Charge Breach	2 + years	Reduced 1 year & probation
42. Male	Domestic	Chose not to participate	
43. Male	Domestic	Inappropriate candidate	Received assistance through workers
44. Female	Theft Drinking in Public	Received assistance through drug and alcohol office	

*Sentenced prior to Biidaaban's implementation, however, was assisted in reintegration.

APPENDIX B

INFORMATION GATHERING QUESTIONNAIRE

THE MINJIKANING COMMUNITY STATE OF HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Thinking back about 5 years ago (1994-1995) where would you place the overall health and well being of the Mnjikaning Community? **Put an "X" over, or circle, the number that best describes your feelings. 0 means no health or well being seems evident; 10 means that the community has achieved a very high level of health and well being. You can be anyplace on this scale.**

1995

0 ⟶1 ⟶2 ⟶3 ⟶4 ⟶5 ⟶6 ⟶7 ⟶8 ⟶9 ⟶10

What are your reasons for placing it here?

1999 - Where would you place your community's state of health and well-being today?

0 ⟶1 ⟶2 ⟶3 ⟶4 ⟶5 ⟶6 ⟶7 ⟶8 ⟶9 ⟶10

Is it better? Not as good? The same" Explain why you placed it there.

What signs do you see that tells you that your community is becoming healthier? (Give as many signs as possible)

If not volunteered: Do you feel BIIDAABAN Minjikaning Community Healing has helped (the state of health and well-being in the community) in any ways? Explain. How, in what ways?

What if BIIDAABAN WERE NO LONGER HERE...NO LONGER EXISTED, how would that affect the community? What would happen? (use other side of paper if necessary).

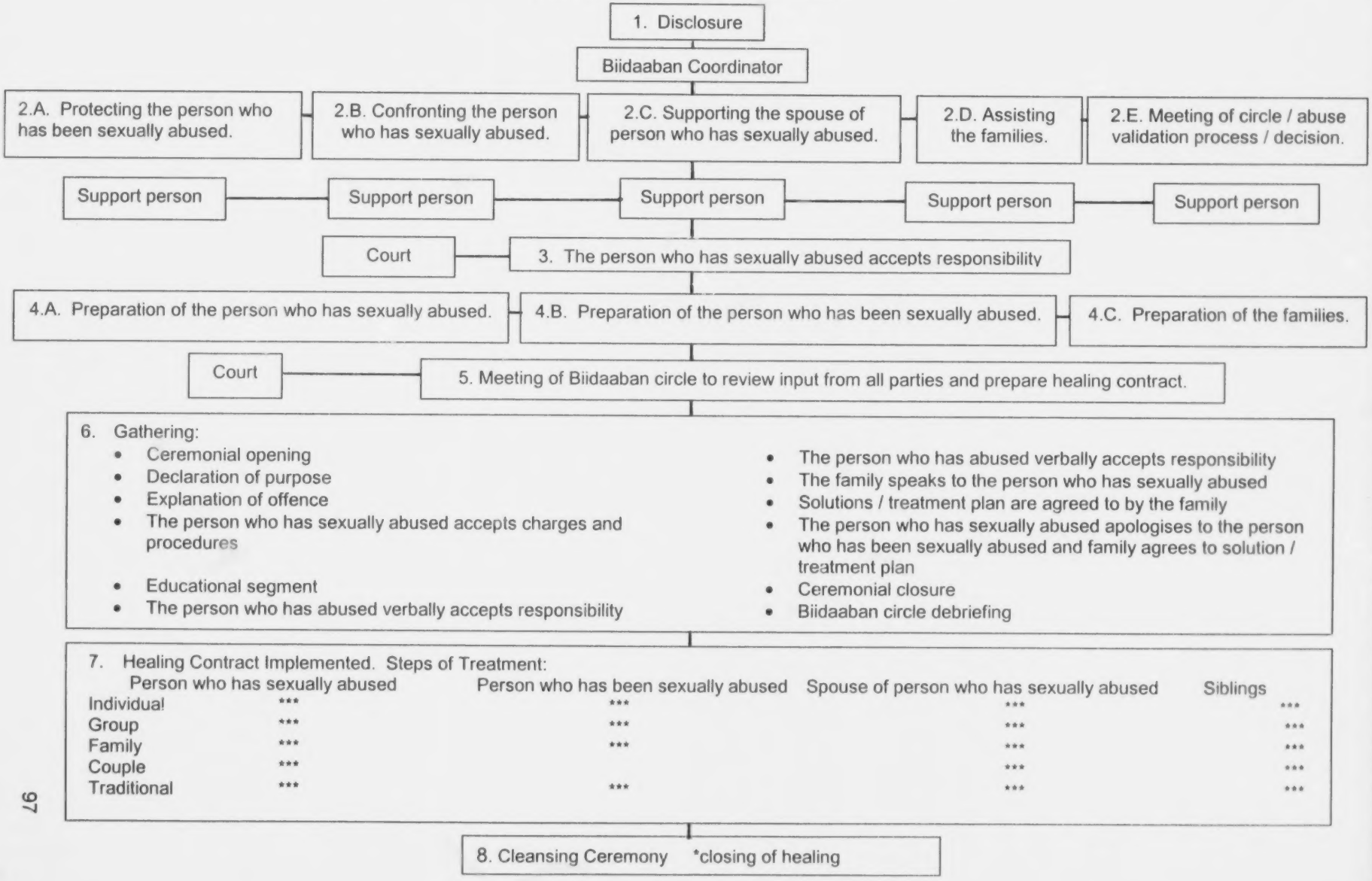
Name_____

Age_____Male_____Female_____

APPENDIX C

BIIDAABAN/THE MNJIKANING COMMUNITY HEALING MODEL

"THE PROTOCOL" – THE STEPS


1. Disclosure
Biidaaban Coordinator
2.A. Protecting the person who has been sexually abused.
2.B. Confronting the person who has sexually abused.
2.C. Supporting the spouse of person who has sexually abused.
2.D. Assisting the families.
2.E. Meeting of circle / abuse validation process / decision.
Support person
Support person
Support person
Support person
Support person
Court
3. The person who has sexually abused accepts responsibility
4.A. Preparation of the person who has sexually abused.
4.B. Preparation of the person who has been sexually abused.
4.C. Preparation of the families.
Court
5. Meeting of Biidaaban circle to review input from all parties and prepare healing contract.
6. Gathering:
• Ceremonial opening
• Declaration of purpose
• Explanation of offence
• The person who has sexually abused accepts charges and procedures
• Educational segment
• The person who has abused verbally accepts responsibility
• The person who has abused verbally accepts responsibility
• The family speaks to the person who has sexually abused
• Solutions / treatment plan are agreed to by the family
• The person who has sexually abused apologises to the person who has been sexually abused and family agrees to solution / treatment plan
• Ceremonial closure
• Biidaaban circle debriefing
7. Healing Contract Implemented. Steps of Treatment:
Person who has sexually abused
Person who has been sexually abused
Spouse of person who has sexually abused
Siblings
Individual *** *** *** ***
Group *** *** *** ***
Family *** *** *** ***
Couple *** *** ***
Traditional *** *** *** ***
8. Cleansing Ceremony *closing of healing

APPENDIX D

INFORMATION FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS

The Information contained in Appendix D is taken directly from the Biidaaban brochure designed to give community members' clear, useful and easily understood information about the healing model. Distribution of the brochure is targeted to places in which those most motivated to use/want to find out about Biidaaban can have ready access to needed information.

The brochure may be found at the police station, in legal offices, in the band office, at the Second Cup, at Biidaaban, and by writing to Biidaaban for copies.

Parts of the following information have been edited slightly to condense the information, without taking away its meaning.

BIIDAABAN

We are a Biidaaban people
Who greet the rising sun
In circle there is healing
For each and everyone
Like tree by flowing water
That grows from Mother Earth
We rise with strengthened spirit
To share in Life's rebirth .

John Wesley Oldham, June 9, 1995

It's not an easy way out!
It takes strength and courage to participate in the Biidaaban Process

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Biidaaban is about:

- Promoting wellness in our community
- Breaking the "Cycle of Abuse"
- Taking responsibility for one's own behavior with the support of a caring community
- Respecting each individual and their values and beliefs
- Helping anyone in the community who requests help
- Understanding forgiveness and reconciliation
- Truth and honesty
- A process based on our First Nations knowledge of healing. Rather than punishment, the community asks that the person who has harmed take responsibility for their actions, make amends and provide restitution

The person that has been harmed needs to agree to the process.

All family and community members involved will be offered support through the process. Biidaaban will attend court with those involved.

What is the Community Process?

Biidaaban is a process based on our First Nation knowledge of healing.

Rather than punishment, the idea is to restore balance in the lives of those affected by harm.

In the Biidaaban process, the ***person who has been harmed:***

- Is provided with support even if the person who has harmed them refuses to participate
- Must agree to the process
- Is given a safe environment to tell the person who has harmed them how the behavior has impacted their life
- Has real input into what happens with community support

The person who has harmed:

- Accepts responsibility for their behavior or actions at a Community Gathering
- Apologizes to those they have harmed
- Makes amends to the person and the community they have harmed
- Provides restitution to the person and the community they have harmed
- Heals their own hurts.

INFORMATION FOR THE PERSON WHO HAS BEEN HARMED

Biidaaban was developed to assist those who have been harmed by someone through their difficult time. If you have been hurt or wronged by someone, we can assist you in exploring the options you have available to make yourself feel safe, restore balance in your life and, if you choose, repair the relationships that have been harmed. We offer the following services:

- Emotional support
- Individual, Couple and Family Counseling
- Group Counseling
  - Sharing/Healing Circles
  - Anger Management
  - Structured Relapse Prevention
  - Women's Groups
  - Men's Groups
- Assistance through the Court Process
- Preparation for the Community Gathering
- Referrals to Traditional Healers
- Referrals to Psychologists and Therapists

INFORMATION FOR THE PERSON WHO HAS HARMED

- As a person who has harmed someone you may or may not be charged by the police.
- You must meet the Biidaaban criteria and take responsibility for your behavior. The person who has been harmed needs to agree to your participation in the process.

- You will meet with the Biidaaban Team, be assigned a Wellness Counselor and sign an Interim Treatment Plan.
- The Treatment Plan will be presented to the Court if you have been charged. Biidaaban will attend court with you, present the Interim Treatment Plan and attempt to have your case adjourned for four months.
- During the four months you will complete the Interim Treatment Plan. This time will give both you and Biidaaban a chance to see if the Community Process is right for you. Biidaaban will give the Court a written report on your progress. The sentence the Court gives you may depend upon your commitment to the Plan.
- You will attend a Community Gathering where the person you have harmed and the community will speak with you about your behavior. They will decide with you how this can be made right with everyone.

INFORMATION FOR THE FAMILY

You may be experiencing a variety of feelings such as anger, shock, fear, guilt, sadness, etc. These are normal feelings at a time like this.

Biidaaban is available to provide support and assistance to all family members of those involved in this process. Whether you are a family member of the person who has been harmed or of the person who has harmed, we offer the following services:

- Emotional support
- Individual, Couple and Family Counseling
- Group Counseling
  - Sharing/Healing Circles
  - Anger Management
  - Structured Relapse Prevention
  - Women's Groups
  - Men's Groups
- Assistance through the Court Process
- Preparation for the Community Gathering
- Referrals to Traditional Healers
- Referrals to Psychologists and Therapists

THE COMMUNITY GATHERING

- The community will be invited to attend the Gathering.
- The Gathering will begin with a ceremonial opening, which will depend on the wishes of the participants.
- The person who has harmed will speak about their wrongful behavior and apologize to the persons they have harmed, their family and community.
- The community will have a chance to speak about this behavior.
- A Treatment Plan will be developed by the community with everyone's input.
- There will be an educational component to the Gathering.
- There will be a six-month review to monitor progress.
- There will be a ceremonial closure.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Biidaaban/The Mnjikaning Community Healing Model

Mnjikaning First Nation
MASK Arena Complex 2nd floor
5884 Rama Road, Suite 200
Rama, Ontario LOK ITO
Tel: (705) 325-3611
Fax: (705) 329-3067

Staff list at the time of writing this report:

Christine Douglas	Manager	Ext.	1430
Lana Shilling	Administrative Assistant	Ext.	1423
Leanne McRae - Douglas	Biidaaban Coordinator	Ext.	1426
Pennie Williams-Louttit	Biidaaban Animator	Ext.	1427
Catherine Cunningham	Youth Justice Worker	Ext.	1428
Dawn Ireland-Noganosh	Wellness Counselor	Ext.	1410

Deanna Shilling	Wellness Counselor	Ext.	1409
Byron Stiles	Addictions Coordinator	Ext	1429
Liette Snache	N.N.A.D.A.P.	Ext.	1431
Stephanie Sandy	Social Counselor	Ext.	1424
Derrick Snache	Native Child Welfare Worker	Ext.	1425

APPENDIX E

BIIDAABAN STATISTICS

1999-2000

GROWTH PATTERNS - 1999/2000

Activity	Quarterly Totals				Comparison - Yearly Totals[24]	
	1999 - Quarter #1	1999 - Quarter #2	2000 - Quarter #3	2000 - Quarter #4	1997-1998	1999-2000
Number of Cases	-	N/A	31	33	29	64
Number of Clients	-	76	79	70	N/A	225
Client Contacts	283	245	293	277	243	1098
Contacts RE: Clients	216	172	216	178	274	782
Referrals	2	1	0	21	11	24
Home Visits	19	28	32	42	15	121
Office Visits	87	115	143	95	140	440
Court Visits	18	15	23	25	40	81
Jail Visits	1	3	8	3	24	15
Intakes	0	3	1	0	15	4
Brief Services	7	12	11	14	29	44
Community Gatherings	0	4	3	1	N/A	8
Circles /with clients	16	4	66	23	N/A	109
Case Management	7	8	4	29	N/A	48
Staff Meetings	7	8	5	6	N/A	26

Team Consult Meetings	48	32	47	40	N/A	167
Contacts With:						
Mnjikaning School	4	13	25	45	N/A	87
Chief and Council	17	19	18	12	N/A	66
Casino Personnel	2	2	9	2	N/A	15
Children's Aid	7	0	8	5	3	20
Sexual Assault Care / Center	1	1	0	1	4	3
Psychologists	29	41	35	18	22	145
Traditional Healers	25	11	12	14	N/A	62
Treatment Centres	1	0	0	11	N/A	12
Liaise with other communities	17	8	41	47	N/A	113
Crown Attorneys	26	22	18	18	34	84
Defense Lawyer	51	40	37	13	37	141
Judges / JP	0	1	6	1	N/A	8
Probation / Parole Officers	12	36	26	21	30	85
Police	12	5	19	49	N/A	95
BAC Meeting	1	0	0	1	N/A	2
Provincial Attorney General	1	0	0	0	3	1
Federal Aboriginal Corrections	6	2	13	6	7	27

FOR THE MOST PART, ACTIVITIES LISTED ABOVE ARE CONSISTENT FROM QUARTER TO QUARTER. ACTIVITIES NOT REPORTED ABOVE TEND TO BE THOSE WHICH MAY OCCUR IN ANY GIVEN QUARTER, BUT NOT ON A REGULAR BASIS. EXAMPLES INCLUDE: ABORIGINAL HEALING FOUNDATION, NATIVE INMATE LIAISON, ABORIGINAL JUSTICE LEARNING NETWORK AND OTHERS.

TIME ANALYSIS FOR WORK WITH A TYPICAL ABUSER

Indictable offence - Sexual exploitation in a Position of Trust -

Indictable Offense - 5 year maximum

(Taken from Biidaaban Case File. Total Abusers to date, 48. Represents the "average" Abuser)

HOURS - 395 total hours

Hard data derived from actual case file statistics- May 13, 1997 to February 4, 2000

(2+yrs.)

DATE	ACTION TAKEN	HOURS - X # OF WORKERS
05/13/97	Disclosure	8hrs. x 2 = 16 hrs.
05/16/97	Brief Service -Barrie Bail Court -Barrie Jail (incl. mother) -Referred to Biidaaban Intake	8hrs x 1 = 8 hrs. 30 min. x 2 = 1 hr.
05/21/97	Barrie Bail Court, incl. mother, Barrie Jail	7 hrs. x 2 = 14 hrs.
05/23/97	Circle @ home, mother & children	2.5hrs.x 4 =10 hrs.
05/27/97	Barrie Bail Court	3 hrs. x 2 = 6 hrs.
05/27/97	Team meeting	30min. x 4 = 2 hrs.
05/28/97	Phone	10min. x 1 = .10
05/29/97	Barrie Bail Court, incl. mother	4hrs. x 2 = 8 hrs.
06/02/97	Orillia Court, incl. mother	2.5hrs. x 3 = 7.5 hrs.
06/03/97	Individual counseling/mother	1 hrs. x 1 = 1 hr.
06/09/97	Orillia Court, including mother	4hrs. x 2 = 8 hrs.
06/10/97	Consult with psychologist	.15min. x 1 = .15
06/16/97	Consult with psychologist	1hrs. x 2 = 2 hrs.
06/19/97	Consult with lawyer	30min. x 1 = .30
06/19/97	Individual counseling - abuser	30min. x 1 = .30
06/25/97	Individual counseling - mother	1hrs. x 1 = 1 hr.

DATE	ACTION TAKEN	HOURS - X # OF WORKERS
06/25/97	Consult with Barrie Jail	15min. x 1 = .15
06/25/97	Consult with psychologist	10 min. x 1 = .10
06/25/97	Consult with Barrie Jail	10 min. x 1 = .10
06/25/97	Consult with psychologist	15 min. x 1 = .15
07/04/97	Barrie Court	3 hrs. x 3 = 9 hrs.
07/07/97	Client phone	10 min. x 1 = .10
07/07/97	Consult with Barrie Jail	10 min. x 1 = .10
07/07/97	Client phone	10 min. x 1 = .10
07/08/97	Mother & child @ Med. Services Psychologist	2 hrs. x 1 = 2 hrs
07/10/97	Individual counseling with mother	1.5 hrs. x 1 = 1.5hrs
07/17/97	Client phone	10 min. x 1 = 10 min.
07/28/97	Team meeting with lawyer	1 hrs. x 5 = 5 hrs.
07/29/97	Team meeting	1 hrs. x 5 = 5 hrs.
07/29/97	Individual counseling with mother	hrs. x 1 = 1.5 hrs.
07/28/97	Team meeting with lawyer	1 hrs. x 5 = 5 hrs.
07/29/97	With mother & child @ psychologist	1.5 hrs. x 1 = 1.5 hrs.
07/30/97	Treatment plan developed by team	1 hrs. x 4 = 4 hrs.
08/01/97	Barrie Court (Pled)	6 hrs. x 8 = 48 hrs.
08/07/97	Individual counseling with mother	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
08/07/97	Individual counseling with mother	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
08/08/97	Barrie Court (Sentencing), with mother	3.5 hrs. x 4 = 14 hrs.
08/11/97	Individual counseling with mother	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
09/09/97	Individual counseling with mother	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
10/16/97	Consult with Children's Aid Society	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
10/21/97	Individual counseling with mother	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
10/22/97	Consult with minister	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
10/27/97	Consult with Children's Aid Society	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.

DATE	ACTION TAKEN	HOURS - X # OF WORKERS
10/27/97	Team meeting	1 hr. x 2 = 2 hrs.
11/7/97	Case management	1 hr. x 5 = 5 hrs.
11/18/97	Met offender at bus (from jail)	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
11/19/97	Took offender to probation office	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
11/20/97	Put offender on bus to Thunder Bay Residential Treatment Centre	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
12/21/97	Offender arrived @ Treatment Centre	0
12/05/97	Case management	30 min. x 1 = 30 min.
12/08/97	Liaison with Treatment Centre	30 min. x 1 = 30 min.
12/08/97	Wrote letter to Welfare re: offender	30 min. x 1 = 30 min.
12/15/97	Liaison with Treatment Centre	30 min. x 1 = 30 min.
12/15/97	Phone contact with offender	30 min. x 1 = 30 min.
12/15/97	Spoke with Welfare re: offender	10 min. x 1 = 10 min.
12/16/97	Requested Crown brief from OPP case	10 min. x 1 = 10 min.
12/16/97	Management	10 min. x 1 = 10 min.
12/18/97	Faxed Consent to Release information to Treatment Centre for Offender	30 min. x 1 = 10 min.
12/18/97	Phone contact with offender	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
1/05/98	Went to Orillia motel to pay offender's rent for 2 weeks	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
1/06/98	Individual counseling with mother	5 min. x 1 = 5 min.
1/06/98	Phone contact with offender	15 min. x 4 = 1 hr.
1/06/98	Team meeting	5 min. x 1 = 5 min.
1/06/98	Phone contact with offender Contacted Probation Officer re: offender	5 min. x 1 = 5 min.
1/09/98	Community Gathering	8 hrs. x 8 = 64 hrs.
2/09/98	Letter to offender	15 min. x 1 = 15 min.
3/19/98	Individual counseling with mother	15 min. x 1 = 15 min.
3/22/98	Consult with psychologist	15 min. x 1 = 15 min.

DATE	ACTION TAKEN	HOURS - X # OF WORKERS
3/24/98	Case management	30 min. x 4 = 2 hrs.
4/09/98	Couple session (offender and wife) with Probation Officer	1 hr. x 2 = 2 hrs.
4/17/98	Case management	30 min. x 4 = 2 hrs.
5/21/98	Probation case management	15 min. x 4 = 1 hr.
5/26/98	Letter to offender	15 min. x 1 = 15 min.
5/22/98	Consult with psychologist	15 min. x 1 = 15 min.
5/22/98	Team meeting	15 min. x 2 = 30 min.
5/23/98	Meeting with Probation Officer	15 min. x 2 = 30 min.
5/23/98	Team meeting	15 min. x 2 = 30 min.
5/29/98	Offender called to make appointment	5 min. x 1 = 5 min.
6/11/98	Meeting with Probation Officer	15 min. x 4 = 1 hr.
6/11/98	Individual counseling with offender	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
6/21/98	Individual counseling with offender	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
7/09/98	Probation case management	15 min. x 4 = 1 hr.
9/08/98	Phone conversation with offender	5 min. x 1 = 5 min.
9/17/98	Probation case management	15 min. x 4 = 1 hr.
9/25/98	Arranging contact with grandmother	5 min. x 1 - 5 min.
9/28/98	Arranging contact with grandmother	5 min. x 1 = 5 min.
9/29/98	Arranging contact with grandmother	5 min. x 1 = 5 min.
10/01/98	Individual counseling with offender	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
10/08/98	Couple counseling	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
10/19/98	Individual counseling with offender	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
10/28/98	Phone call to Cedar Lodge	15 min. x 1 = 15 min
10/28/98	Discussion with Cedar Lodge	15 min. x 1= 15 min.
11/03/98	Individual counseling	30 min. x 1 = 30 min.
11/03/98	Team meeting	15 min. x 3 = 45 min.
11/04/98	Home visit to family (with mother)	8 hrs. x 1 = 8 hrs.

DATE	ACTION TAKEN	HOURS - X # OF WORKERS
11/11/98	Phone discussion with extended family	15 min. x 1 = 15 min.
11/12/98	Phone discussion with extended family	15 min. x 1 = 15 min.
11/12/98	Phone contact with offender	5 min. x 1 = 5 min.
11/12/98	Discussion with mother	5 min. x 1 = 5 min.
11/14/98	Family circle	3 hrs. x 1 = 3 hrs.
11/18/98	Phone/office with offender	30 min. x 1 = 30 min.
11/19/98	Home visit with offender	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
12/02/98	Home visit with offender	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
12/09/98	Phone contact with offender	15 min. x 1 = 15 min.
12/12/98	Office visit with offender	30 min. x 1 = 30 min.
01/22/99	Phone contact with offender & mother	30 min. x 1 = 30 min.
01/25/99	Office visit with mother	30 min. x 1 = 30 min.
02/18/99	Office visit with offender	15 min. x 1 = 15 min.
03/10/99	Family circle	2 hrs. x 1 = 2 hrs.
03/11/99	Case management	30 min. x 6 = 3 hrs.
03/17/99	Phone treatment	5 min. x 1 = 5 min.
03/18/99	Phone treatment	5 min. x 1 = 5 min.
03/19/99	Phone treatment	5 min. x 1 = 5 min.
03/19/99	Phone contact with offender	15 min. x 1 = 15 min.
06/02/99	Team meeting	30 min. x 4 = 2 hrs.
08/17/99	Case review with offender & family	3 hrs. x 8 = 24 hrs.
07/15/99	Meeting with offender & Probation Officer	15 min. x 1 = 15 min.
07/20/99	Office visit with offender	30 min. x 1 = 30 min.
09/16/99	Case management with Parole Officer	30 min. x 4 = 15 min.
11/02/99	Phone contact with offender	15 min. x 1 = 15 min.
11/03/99	Case management	15 min. x 4 = 1 hr.
11/12/99	Team consultation	10 min. x 2 = 20 min.

DATE	ACTION TAKEN	HOURS - X # OF WORKERS
11/15/99	Team consultation	10 min. x 3 = 30 min.
11/16/99	Team meeting	5 min. x 2 =10 min.
11/18/99	Team meeting	10 min. x 3 = 30 min.
11/18/99	Phone contact with offender	10 min. x 1 = 10 min
11/19/99	Home visit with offender	30 min. x1 = 30 min.
11/19/99	Contact family	5 min. x 1 = 5 min.
11/19/99	Contact victim	5 min. x 1 = 5 min.
11/20/99	Contact family	5 min. x 1 = 5 min.
11/22/99	Home visit with victim	1 hr. x 1 = 1 hr.
11/29/99	Closing Gathering	5 hrs. x 8 = 40 hrs.
02/02-04/00	Phone contact with offender/office visit	15/30 min. x 1 = 45 min

ENDNOTES

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[1] Smith SE, Williams DG, Johnson NA. *Nurtured by knowledge: learning to do participatory action-research.* New York: Apex Press, 1997. *This approach has worked well with Biidaaban.*

[2] BMJ Psychiatry Link, 1999; 319: 774-778 (18 September): on-line resource for practicing psychiatrists, http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/319 (7217): 774.

[3] Casino Corporate Affairs/Director of Mnjikaning Culture and Communications, Sept. 2000.

[4] Chiefs of Ontario Special Report on Casino Rama, May 1, 1998. The Long Road. Appendix B. pp 1-8.

[5] Ross, Rupert, Assistant Crown Attorney in northwestern Ontario since 1985. Responsible for prosecutions on over twenty remote Cree and Ojibway First Nations and author of *Dancing with a Ghost,* national best-seller used for course instruction. *Returning to the Teachings, p. 47.* Penguin Books, 1996.

[6] Statistics drawn from the Director of Corporate Affairs, Director of Culture and Communications in Mnjikaning.

[7] Biidaaban: The Mnjikaning Community Healing Model: Site Visit Report, The Four Worlds Centre for Development Learning, August, 1998, pp. 10, 17.

[8] Onkwatenro'Shon': 'A Health Planners, Edward A. Connors, Ph.D.C. Psych: Chippewas of Rama Health Center: Some healing models explored: CHCH, Hollow Water; Alkali Lake, Oates, L. Native Treatment Programs, Terrace, B.C. Dr. Connors continues to facilitate the Community Gathering, and continues to provide counselling and psychological services to Biidaaban and its clients.

[9] Solicitor General (1997) The Four Circles of Hollow Water: See the 13 Step Process. Ottawa, Aboriginal Peoples Collection, p. 2.

[10] See Appendix C. Biidaaban Protocol and Biidaaban Information for Community members, booklet distribution.

[11] Pam Burke, Crown Attorney.

[12] In-depth interview: Ross, Rupert, Refer to Chap. 2., p.20.

[13] In-depth interview: Ross, Rupert, Refer to Chap. 2. p. 20.

[14] See Appendix A. Person who has Abused/Harmed Possible /Actual Sentence.

[15] See Appendix E. Biidaaban growth comparisons, year 1997-1998 and 1999-2000. Time/Value Analysis, A Typical Abuser.

[16] Biidaaban refers to the client as "the person who has harmed", and the victim as "the person who has been harmed." Another term used is "person who has abused". This terminology acknowledges that the core or spirit of the person is "whole" and that he/she has simply done a wrong, gotten out of balance. This belief helps the person to heal because the person can heal the wrong. Innately he/she is whole but has done some harm, which gets him/her temporarily out of balance.

[17] April 28, 2000 report issued on Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, a 700 member bipartisan coalition of police chiefs, sheriffs and crime victims. The study compared children in and out of day care programs in rural, suburban and urban areas in the U.S. The research involved 1000 children, ages 3-4 in Day Care.

[18] USA Today, January 2001, article, Beginning at age 11. Neuroscientist MRI research indicates that the brain undergoes major reorganization in an area associated with social behavior and impulse control making it vulnerable to traumatic experiences, drug abuse and unhealthy influences. Project Dare is a proactive approach that addresses these findings.

[19] David Cayley, The Expanding Prison: The Crises in Crime and Punishment, pp. 191-192.

[20] Excerpted from Biidaaban Quarterly Report format.

[21] Appendix E. Biidaaban Stats - 1999-2000 - Growth Patterns Past Year - Correlation and compilation of Biidaaban Activities/Growth, past year. Also, 1st qtr. July/Sept. 1999 report.

[22] Profile is drawn from each staff member's biographical sketch constructed to exemplify the strength and breadth of Biidaaban staff training and professional experience. Information is also drawn from quarterly reports.

[23] Marshall, W. (1997). Treatment of Sexual Offenders: Current Approaches with Non-Aboriginals and their Relevance for Aboriginal Offenders, p.71.

[24] 1997-1998: This represents a 1-year period, beginning April 1, and ending March 31.
1999:

Quarter #1 represents July, August, and September. (1999)
Quarter #2 represents October, November December. (1999)
Quarter #3 represents January, February, March. (2000)

Quarter #4 represents April May June. (2000)

Quarterly designations may differ from Biidaaban to ensure ease in reading total yearly statistics.